DISSENT

The American School

For a Democratic Culture — **MICHAEL WALZER**

Issues and Goals in the Debate — **MELVIN TUMIN**

Industry East and West

The Second Industrial Revolution — **FRITZ STERNBERG**

30 Years of Soviet Industry — **GREGORY GROSSMAN**

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In the Book Section

A. J. Muste and Irving Howe present two views on C. Wright Mills' "Causes"; Erich Fromm discusses Trotsky's "Diary"

SPRING 1959 — **75c**

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VOICES OF DISSENT

A 384 page book, available in hard cover and paperback editions, which brings together as a permanent record 35 of the best articles that have appeared in DISSENT during its first five years. $1.95 per copy, paperback, postpaid.

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Voices of Dissent, published by Grove Press, opens with a Preface by *Norman Thomas* and an Introductory Note by *Irving Howe,* which place the magazine in the context of both American socialism and the problems of current intellectual life. There follow articles by Silone, Mailer, Mills, Harold Rosenberg, and *Much, Much, More.*

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DISSENT

VOLUME VI
NUMBER 2

SPRING 1959

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A QUARTERLY OF SOCIALIST OPINION

CONTENTS

Page

ARTICLES

THE AMERICAN SCHOOL:
EDUCATION FOR A DEMOCRATIC CULTURE: I—*by Michael Walzer* 107
ISSUES AND GOALS IN THE DEBATE—*by Melvin Tumin* 121

CUBA'S REVOLT — AN HISTORICAL APPRAISAL — *by Livio Stecchini* 129

INDUSTRY EAST AND WEST:
THE SECOND INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND THE WESTERN WORLD—*by Fritz Sternberg* ... 134
30 YEARS OF SOVIET INDUSTRIALIZATION—*by Gregory Grossman* 150

A LAST POEM—*by Bertolt Brecht* 149

AMERICAN NOTEBOOK
TO HELL WITH CULTURE — *by Hilton Kramer* 162
THE DESERTED VILLAGE — *by Maurice Stein* 168

PROSPECTS FOR A CHANGE IN THE COMMUNIST WORLD — *by Francois Fejto* 171
A CRITICAL COMMENT — *by Henry Pachter* 177

THE SOPHIST: A PORTRAIT — *by Jean-Marie Domenach* 185

COMMUNICATIONS

A REPLY TO CRITICS—*by Hannah Arendt* 179

THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE — *by William Spinrad* 182

BOOKS

C. WRIGHT MILLS' PROGRAM: TWO VIEWS—(1) *by A. J. Muste;* (2) *by Irving Howe* 189

AN ESTIMATE OF TROTSKY — *by Erich Fromm* 196

SEEDS BENEATH THE SNOW — *by Lewis Coser* 198

MISCELLANY

A FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH DOSTOEVSKY—*by Ignazio Silone* 200

FOR MEN ONLY—*by Charles Shapiro* 201

LETTERS 203

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AMONG OURSELVES

The total for our bi-annual fund drive, as of March 1, is $6,500. This figure ensures our survival for the next two years; and we wish again to express our genuine and deep gratitude to all our friends who chipped in. Still, we can't help expressing regret that (a) the *number* of contributions was only slightly larger than in 1956 and (b) that we didn't reach our goal of $7,500. The difference may seem small; but it is just this difference that matters in terms of promotion, editorial projects, etc. Most of the money has to go to the printer and for unavoidable expenses. It's that little extra sum which allows us to grow and improve. So if any readers feel belatedly prompted to help make it up, don't let the formal end of the fund drive keep you from doing so.

Meanwhile, may we ask those who made pledges to honor them promptly?

●

We're planning a large promotional mailing of back sample copies this May; and we'd appreciate getting from our readers *selected* lists of names: people who they think might subscribe if they saw a copy. Together with this sample copy we'll send our new, handsome folder announcing DISSENT and our book, *Voices of Dissent*. (Copies of this folder can be had in quantity, free, on request.)

●

This may be a good place to say something about a problem that seems to concern some readers. *Why,* someone asks, *did you print that article by X?* (It's usually the same article that another reader likes very much.) That an article gets into DISSENT doesn't necessarily mean that a given editor agrees with it, or that all of us like it. We have no editorial "line" other than a general commitment to the values of democratic socialism. We print articles with which some or even all of us disagree, and which we know many of our readers will disagree with. But it would make for a very dull (if pious) magazine to print only things that satisfy our existing sentiments. Sometimes, an article seems worth printing just because it does provoke one into dissent, or even irritation. Sometimes, it seems good to have our own assumptions challenged in our pages. And, given the nature of DISSENT, no one (neither editor nor reader) can reasonably expect to agree with or be pleased by every article.

●

We are short of help in New York City, and many DISSENT plans are frustrated simply because we need more typists, clerical workers, etc. But what we need most of all is *reliable* and *steady* help; it isn't the frequency that matters so much, as the reliability. The work isn't glamorous, but it does the spirit good. If you want to help, call MO 3-9403, any evening.

●

A flock of books by DISSENT editors and contributors has recently appeared—books by Erich Fromm, Irving Howe, Harold Rosenberg, David Spitz, Melvin Tumin, C. Wright Mills, Robert Bone, Sidney Lens and others. It is our policy *not* to review books by the editors. As for the rest, we hope to get around to them in the next few issues.

●

DISSENT editors have been busy speaking for various socialist groups this winter. In New York City there was held in late February a DISSENT-sponsored conference on the problem of American education, attended by 100 people and at which Lewis Coser, Michael Walzer and Melvin Tumin spoke. Ernst Papanek was Chairman. Irving Howe spoke for the Politics Club at the University of Chicago, for the Socialist Party in Chicago and Ann Arbor, and for the Democratic Socialist Forum in Detroit. In New York City, Howe and Meyer Schapiro spoke for an SP forum on *Dr. Zhivago*. Coser took a short trip, speaking in Chicago, Detroit and Ann Arbor. There will be a DISSENT student conference for the New England area this spring at Yale University; details elsewhere in this issue.

●

Some of these meetings were held under DISSENT auspices; others by the Socialist Party and others by local forums in which democratic socialists, affiliated and free-lance, participate. It is encouraging to note that in a number of cities local groups of the Socialist Party, and especially its youth affiliate, the Young Peoples Socialist League, have recently become active. One reason for this renewed activity is that the Independent Socialist League, led by Max Shachtman, decided recently to dissolve itself so that

continued on page 208

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With this issue DISSENT *opens what we hope will be a sustained discussion on the problems of American education. The article by Michael Walzer is the first of a two part study; the second, a documented study dealing with concrete problems in the American schools, will appear in our next issue. The article by Melvin Tumin is a shortened version of a talk he gave at a recent* DISSENT *forum in New York City. Further contributions on this topic are invited —though with the caution that, due to our space problem, they may have to be held for several issues.*—EDITORS

EDUCATION FOR A DEMOCRATIC CULTURE: I

Michael Walzer

> . . . the men of culture are the true apostles of equality. The great men of culture are those who have had a passion for diffusing, for making prevail, for carrying from one end of society to the other, the best knowledge, the best ideas, of their time; who have labored to divest knowledge of all that was harsh, uncouth, difficult, abstract, professional, exclusive; to humanize it, to make it efficient outside the *clique* of the cultivated and the learned, yet still remaining the *best* knowledge and thought of the time, and a true source, therefore, of sweetness and light.—*Matthew Arnold*

The ownership of the old ruling classes is not a thing of permanence; one can foresee the end of their control of both property and culture. The only difficulty is to identify concretely their successors. Who will inherit the culture of the educated and the leisured classes? It is a question not only of their ornaments and their entertainments, but of that whole range of knowledge and beauty which is the basis of creativity in the arts and also in science and politics. The product of the often painful labor of men of intellect and sensibility, recruited from all social classes, culture has been very much the "possession" of the ruling classes. And if they have possessed it, they have also protected it, given it a broad scope limited only by their interests and their security, and provided the social medium of cultural exchange.

If the new men in the realm of property are to be managers and bureaucrats, then it is at least possible that the new men of culture will be members of an increasingly narrow group of professional intellectuals: academicians and servants of the giant foundations. Deprived of the insulation of class barriers and of the patronage of men who owed their cultivation, so to speak, to their social positions, these intellectuals

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will be responsible, as never before, to public authority. By and large, the private sponsorship of cultural activity is already impossible; at any rate, it is not possible on such a scale as will guarantee a vital and significant intellectual life. The result of this will probably be a growing tendency to institutionalize the arts and sciences and to support them in some public fashion. Art and science must then justify themselves before their new patrons, no longer by claiming to enhance the lives of a relatively small group, but by claiming to serve the needs and to increase the powers of government and industry. The intellectual will fashion a specialization, cutting himself off from men in other fields; in it he will discover a new responsibility and then a new bond.

To retreat from these responsibilities will be to retreat either out of public view, as Oppenheimer would have had the scientists do, or into public notoriety, as our "beatniks" have done. The first of these aims at an old-fashioned independence and would probably achieve only isolation; the second makes genuine creative effort impossible. The choice of the intellectual of the immediate future may be briefly summarized: on the one hand, he may make his culture useful or entertaining; he may turn it into a commodity to serve the purposes of destruction or consumption. On the other hand, he may practice a form of intellectual purism which in the modern world might be counted upon to yield both the recluse and the clown. Still, given the social meaning of the first alternative, the loneliness of the second may prove only a form of self-protection and its clowning, when that occurs, only a minor self-indulgence.

There is, however, another choice, which exists because responsibility to public authority is still, in the West at least, in part responsibility to the public. This choice was once the hope and, what is more, the firm intention of men like ourselves: it was that class culture would be succeeded not by a bureaucratically sponsored but by a democratic culture. More explicitly, it is the hope that the intellectual, instead of being progressively more isolated from all groups in society, will succeed in making contact with large numbers of men and women, outside of what remains of the upper classes and independent of the activities of government and commerce.

Such an achievement could re-establish the independence of the intellectual and the integrity of culture itself. It would create an audience whose response would be one of shared concern, not based on the prestige value which culture always had for the upper classes nor on that crude utilitarian calculus which determines value for modern bureaucrats. It would thrust the intellectual into a new relationship with his audience, a relationship of solidarity and democratic give-and-take, and ultimately, one may hope, it would transform the audience into a band of participants.

This third alternative obviously requires a significant amount of interest, intelligence, alertness—and also some sort of cultural activism —among large numbers of men. Not, by any means, that all men will

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or ought to become intellectuals, but communication and, to a more limited degree, cooperation, must be made possible, and this not only for the sake of the enjoyment of art and literature, but also for the sake of political responsibility. Today it may safely be said that a democratic culture is the necessary precondition for a democratic politics.

The immediate responsibility for cultural democracy falls upon education. It is not too much to say that education today must be judged by the degree to which it makes the third alternative a possibility. The schools, of course, have other tasks, though their most basic tasks are related to this one; it is equally true that there would be other factors, above all political ones, involved in the success of a democratic culture. But the schools remain our present concern, perhaps because, in an age when politics is so difficult, the training of children appears as an easier path; perhaps because we have inherited a grand optimism as to the possibilities of education. More likely, our interest has its roots in that same educational "crisis" which is proclaimed by men whose goals are so very different from our own. These men have at least one virtue: they have made education a *question* again.

America is today debating its educational problems. It is a debate in which we must take part and the two essays which follow—the first historical and ideological, the second factual and descriptive (in the next issue)—represent, hopefully, only the beginning of a discussion in DISSENT.

I

Because aristocrats and capitalists, French noblemen, Dutch burghers or English gentry, were also *men,* the greatest achievements of their civilization necessarily become mankind's. But neither Rembrandt's paintings, Racine's plays, nor Newton's science were offerings to democracy—nor it can be said that, available at last (they are available, at least in the technical sense, to literate men), they have become democracy's own. The reception of humane culture in modern democratic society, the appropriation by all men of their own historical achievement, this is today a matter of uncertainty. It should be said also that only today is it a matter of possibility. The explanation of both these statements must be sought in the nature of class society.

As they did not (willingly) share their wealth, so the ruling classes did not share their education. For centuries the mass of men was trained only in submission, in minor skills which made its members serviceable to those above them. They were seldom invited to admire in poetry or philosophy the wonder of the universe, nor to know men radically different from themselves. They did not share that practical knowledge which brings power nor that other knowledge which brings good form. In class society men learn primarily what they *need* to know and their needs tend to be limited by their class position; beyond the confines of that position lies a world of superstition and simple ignorance. Because they were not yet—until democracy had made them so—public men, the education of the masses was for centuries apolitical. Except

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occasionally, it was not even necessary to teach them obedience: only rarely did their horizon take dissent or rebellion into view. Taxes and war were for them natural events, not subject to their human control, submitted to, fled from, and provided against.

Idle curiosity has been the privilege of those who have idle moments—and for them it is often only an enhancement of prestige. The intellectual history of all other men seems almost as if it were a curse. Against this curse multitudes have struggled for generations. First in the name of religion, later of revolution, they have painfully sought that knowledge which would make them public men, prospective saints or citizens. But the thrust of modern industrialism—more especially, of cultural mass production—has overwhelmed this slow process of self-education and it has broken apart the communities in which it was possible. In a way we would not have imagined but a century ago, the modern machine has brought into our cities a more frightening version of what Marx once called the "idiocy" of the countryside. Isolated and alone, subject to politics as he was to nature, superstitious and selfish: if this is a description of the life of the peasant (and it is a very partial one), he changed his condition but little when he came to the metropolis.

Yet none of this suggests a lack of intelligence, energy and ingenuity. Nor is it necessary or inevitable that the machine be made a villain. Surely it has been the great crime of class society that it has systematically limited the possibility for self-expression, for public activity, for socially relevant thought and creativity on the part of masses of men. The result has been that the cultural creations of these men (folk-cultures) have never assumed a stature capable of withstanding the uprooting and transforming pressures of modern industrialization or of resisting their own replacement by commercially produced cultural forms. It is only in the sense of this replacement that there has occurred that vulgarization of art and thought which reactionary writers attribute to the masses themselves. That vulgarization is, of course, a fact: it is embodied daily in our popular press, movie theaters and television screens. It is not, however, the product of the rise—far less of the revolt —of the masses; these events have had, in fact, products of considerably greater value, both culturally and politically. The vulgarization of culture represents rather the articulation from above and the mass exploitation of a centuries-old ignorance, an eternal craving for excitement, a taste for sex and scandal coarsened and heightened as it is more or less deliberately fed.

All this is democracy's inheritance from class society—along with the "culture of the ages." It poses two dramatic challenges to democratic education: first, to provide a worthwhile substitute for the traditional training aimed at narrow and permanent class roles; second, to provide at least a sense that alternatives exist to the mass culture produced outside the school, to inculcate a resistance to the easy and superficial enjoyments which are offered to masses of men in lieu, as it were, of the activity and involvement which democracy once promised.

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II

The most immediate attempt to meet these challenges is made in the course of the actual historical attack upon class society, in the course, that is, of revolution. In revolution we can discover one of the significant moments in the history of education.

Despite its possession of the culture, there has never been a ruling class which succeeded in patronizing art and science so effectively as to make them permanent allies of its government. Instead, the new ideas of men who have shunned such patronage, the lonely thinker, the *avant garde* artist, have traditionally provided the ideological forces of revolution. If these men have claimed the privileges of their new knowledge, they have also obeyed its injunctions. Philosophers and saints, bourgeois intellectuals and, more recently, the men of the proletarian vanguard: all have proclaimed the stupidity of the established order and mocked the pretensions of the ruling class. But if that class was not merely to be replaced—and, whatever the result, that was never the intention—the knowledge of the revolutionary intellectual had to be shared.

Such a sharing was made possible by the self-educating activity of a rising social class, a bourgeoisie or a proletariat. Self-education begins outside the school: in the home of the English yeoman, with its one book the newly translated Bible; in the literary societies and masonic lodges of the 18th century bourgeoisie; in the study groups organized by socialist parties in the 19th century. The importance of such independent activity, based on class initiative, must not be underestimated. Education, like any other benefit which society can offer, must first be sought, must be demanded. To a significant degree, the progress of democratic education can be linked to the aggressive social climbing, to the radical aspiration for status, material gain and public responsibility which always characterizes the members of a rising class. To these aspirations, the intellectual lends the form and content of his new knowledge and enthusiasm.

In the name of one or another of the great social classes, "all England" was to be made a "land of the saints"; France, a Republic of Virtue; Russia, a communist society. In each case the educating or the self-educating of the masses was a major element in revolutionary activity. The founding of schools, colleges and lectureships by the English Puritans, the creation of a national educational system by Jacobin decree, the early Bolshevik experiments with progressive teaching methods and the campaign against illiteracy: these were regarded as major steps along the path to utopia.

In each of the great revolutions utopia was sought by teaching man his potential role in a newly discovered universe, by relating him in a radically new way to God, Nature or History. In each, consciousness, as Lenin once wrote, was half (or more) of salvation. Ignorance, Marx told the "spontaneous" revolutionary Weitling, will never make a revolution. Society could be transformed only by objective knowl-

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edge. Whether such knowledge would be gained through experience, through actual social life, as Marx thought, or whether through the patient schooling of social-democracy, is less important than the fact that through radical aspiration men would come to know the truth about themselves and their society.

In the 18th century the new truth was psychological: through its critique of innate ideas and its thorough-going environmentalism, psychology "unveiled" Christianity, justified a faith in progress and set the task of the revolution. If man was shaped by his environment, then his environment must be made human. In the 19th century the new truth was contained in Marxist economics and history with their critique both of the "iron laws" of capitalism and of the capitalist's claim to permanence. Once again the existing world was "unveiled" and possibilities for improvement, for transformation suggested. In each of these cases two essential points are illustrated. First, it was a substantial body of knowledge that was required of thousands and hundreds of thousands of men. Both Marxism and the work of the *philosophes* offered significant and disciplined insights and both were rooted in a long tradition of intellectual endeavor. To learn the things they taught was to deserve the inheritance the revolution promised.

The second point is even more important. The knowledge which revolutionists taught, and rising social classes learned, was directed toward social conflict. To teach the worker economics, mathematics or history was not to adjust him to his job; it was, in intention at least, to make him its master. And in studying for mastery, the worker was educating himself against his class position, against his assigned place in the *status quo*. This was a matter not only of difficulty but of danger, and especially dangerous it was insofar as the knoweldge of *philosophes* and socialists laid claim to universality and absolute truth. Universal knowledge could only produce rebels against the particular conditions of class society. Bourgeois and worker, if educated in large enough numbers, would necessarily challenge the political power and cultural supremacy of the older ruling classes. Whether overtly revolutionary or not, it is difficult to see how a truly democratic education can have different results—unless the knowledge which is taught ceases to be universal, becomes instead partial, incomplete, relativistic, adjusted to the presumed needs of different men.

III

"If man draws all his knowledge, sensations, etc. from the world of the senses and the experience gained in it, the empirical world must be arranged so that in it man experiences and gets used to what is really human . . ." Thus Marx summed up the teachings of French sensationalist psychology and drew his own conclusion. It was not necessary, however, to go so far. For the sake of man it might be required that the entire empirical world be re-arranged; but the child was father to the man and the child's world far easier to control. That it might be controlled and the new man created artificially, as it were,

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in the midst of the old order: this hope has been the basis of a significant and perennial optimism among educators. It has been manifest in the work of French *philosophes,* of revolutionary Russians, of American "instrumentalists." By creating in the school an ideal environment, these men have suggested, it would be possible to create an ideal child. Revolution would not be necessary (or not necessary *again*) and the path of evolution would run through the classroom.

The essential basis for this environmentalism is the idea that a child enters upon life with his mind and his person only a blank tablet upon which a skillful teacher might well sketch a masterpiece. Because the child was as yet nothing, he might become everything; he was infinitely educable, capable of learning anything if only it was emphatically enough scored upon the tablet of his mind. An 18th century French writer boasted that he could raise a generation of Shakespeares, and if his theory was correct, it was not an idle boast. He only required to be placed in charge of a generation of children. Education was thus a key to progress, to cultural advance, and the control of the child a key to the creation of a new world.

There is about all this a certain graceless naïveté and optimism which is not unattractive. Nevertheless, both in its unrecognized limitations and in its much-vaunted possibilities, there are dangers. First of all—and it is an odd charge to make—the environmentalist most often raised his school in a vacuum. For him, education was a social force without a concretely recognized surrounding society; it was a path which led from anywhere to utopia. The school was itself the only environment that the environmentalist understood. Whereas the revolutionaries had recognized that between themselves and the surrounding world there could only be conflict, the environmentalists were reformers who tended to feel that they could improve the world without coming into contact with it. And so they failed also to recognize the contacts which the world imposed. A single example will suffice. There was in enviromentalist theory an implicit equalitarianism: all children, that is, arrived equally blank, awaiting imprint. But this was hardly an equalitarianism capable of dealing with the children who actually arrived—already equipped with social senses, with a pathetic instinct for class lines. To impose a common schooling would undoubtedly be to weaken such instincts. The imposition, however, is in no sense automatic: it requires struggle, it produces conflict. Not recognizing this, educational reformers have set themselves only indecisively against class society.

In their critique of the reformers, the revolutionaries often proved the greater realists. They insisted that the established educational system could only be understood as a reflection of the existing order, a training ground for future stalwarts of the *status quo.* Has ever a society, they asked, willingly established anything else? Catholic monks might in fact educate future Jacobins, but not intentionally, not according to plan. Radicalism was the product of actual social conflict,

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of the vigorous self-assertion of rising classes, of rapid change, but not of social manipulation and certainly not of schooling. The school of the environmentalist, his attractive but private moral world, was really a myth; even such a tutor as Rousseau offered to Emile—one teacher for one child—could never establish a sufficiently isolated environment in which to raise an entirely new man. Control—it is a hard lesson—to be successful must be total. Or, to put the matter less emphatically, the school will always be impinged upon by society; any effort made within its walls must also be made outside them.

IF THE ENVIRONMENTALIST were to recognize the actual world, however, he would have no choice but to submit—or to control it and shape others to submission. Control it he probably cannot. To submit happily, then, he must create another myth: that the existing world is, or is becoming, a sufficient world for man. American "instrumentalism" in the 1930's was based upon such a myth. Believing that they were watching a noble drift toward a collectivist and a cooperative society, many educators sought to reflect such a society in their schools, to train the child for the "new world now coming into being," and thus to assist at its arrival. If this world did not arrive, however, the schools would slowly but helplessly come to reflect whatever actually *was* the main drift. And, indeed, the transition from the pseudo-collectivism of the thirties to the "togetherness" of the fifties is not a difficult one. The point is that the environmentalist is driven either to ignore the society that surrounds the school, to create a purely local environment—which is probably impossible and at any rate ineffective —or to admit society into the school—which, and we shall argue this point below, is pernicious.

The second danger of environmentalist theory is contained in the very possibilities it suggests. Whether or not the child is a *tabula rasa,* to treat him as if this is so is to establish a relationship inherently immoral, a relationship that is deeply manipulative. For in educating a child who is only a neutral being, as yet nothing, a blank abstraction, it is possible at least theoretically to do anything with him. He can, perhaps, be made a Shakespeare; as easily, and with more likelihood, he can be shaped into a junior executive. Precisely because of this flexibility, educators in a totalitarian society require just such a blankness as the *philosophes,* content with simpler visions, invented. Stalinist psychologists have frequently denounced the Freudian notion of a more substantial and more devious personality existing on various levels of consciousness: "How can we use the Freudian conception of man for socialist construction? We need a socially 'open' man who is easily collectivized and quickly and profoundly transformed in his behavior . . ." If man is "open" enough, he is subject to extreme control: its extent is only a matter of the limitations of technique.

In the West, of course, environmentalists have been far from totalitarians. They have been gentle reformers and their use of such tech-

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niques as they possess has been limited by their essentially humanitarian purposes. But their work can hardly be called successful. It has served only to emphasize the ambiguous position which the school occupies in relation to society as a whole. To shape a truly independent educational environment is not possible. To "seize" the schools it would be necessary first to seize the state, but then education is transformed into "re-education," into "education from above": all independence is lost. The question, however, is not really of independence at all; it is one of *selective resistance*. And for this, there are possibilities which lie not in the control of the schools, but rather in the control of their subject matter. This is a problem in the definition of culture, in its standards and its content, and environmentalist theory appears to offer no key. Its tradition, in so far as it has survived, has emphasized rather the techniques of education than its content. Its vague humanitarianism has failed to link those techniques to a definite cultural purpose. Consequently, educational reformers have tended easily to shift their emphasis from the improvement of society through the child to the improvement of the child in relation to society. They have tended, that is, to accede to the main drift.

IV

"However successful organized labor has been in many ways," wrote an American educator in 1914, "it has never succeeded in directing the education of its children. Capital still prepares the school books and practically controls the school systems of the world." American schools have reflected, and that directly, the world of business, competition and acquisition. Labor, often imitating, if not sharing, the values of this world, has offered no consistent, urgent or vital alternative. The very progress of educational reform in the 19th century, dependent as it was upon the support of capital, effectively fastened the values of capitalism upon the schools. The effort to break down class lines through free education was quite seriously meant, but this was an effort aimed rather at some occasional Horatio Alger than at the working class as a whole. The schools would justify themselves by proving to both Alger and his patrons that they possessed a cash value. For education, wrote Horace Mann, a reformer capable of more noble pronouncements, "has a market value . . . it is so far an article of merchandise that it may be turned to pecuniary account; it may be minted and will yield a larger amount of statutable coin than common bullion."

Learning became, like virtually everything else, an acquisitive process, directed toward the future accumulation of commodities. For a selected few, it might thus become an avenue of upwards mobility—but only for a few. The rest, as Dewey wrote, would carry away from the schools little more than "a narrowly practical tool with which to get bread and butter enough to eke out a restricted life." Beyond this nothing was necessary but an acceptance of restriction, of human limitation, by the masses of men who would have to endure it. The Algers must

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appear one at a time to storm the windmill of capitalist success. If they should ever appear in a mob, capitalism itself might be endangered. This event 19th century educators set themselves, quite consciously, to avoid.

So long as the voice of independent, aggressive, self-interested man is not heard, the schools will serve appointed social goals. In the nineteenth century one of these goals was social pacification; today that same goal is sought through "life adjustment." These are but two forms of an educational process which meets neither of the challenges described in the first section. On the one hand, men continue to be trained for class roles. The facts of social organization repeatedly break through the formal structure of the democratic school. In vocational training and in business education, society's division of labor is actually reproduced within the school. Education becomes partial, particular, limited. On the other hand, the school tends to reproduce with emphasis the common features of American life, to suggest an American mood, a harmony of interests, an ethic of *individual* advance. It is not culture itself that is shared among its students, but only a particular social incarnation of culture, a tethered spirit, a philistine form. Instead of the young citizen being trained in that universal knowledge which would make possible his active participation in a democratic politics and culture, he is trained only in those particular skills which make him a worker, a middle class man, etc. This training is supplemented by a more general education not in politics but in patriotism, not in culture but in *kitsch*.

One form of this extraordinarily limited schooling deserves special examination: it is vocational training. Ever since the appearance of the Diggers in 17th century England, socialists have insisted upon the dignity of human labor. No less than the workers, the men of "idleness and exercised wit" had sacrificed a part of their human person to the division of labor. Might not this fragmented person be put together again in the schools? "The education of the future," Marx wrote, "will in the case of every child over a certain age combine productive labor with education and athletics, not merely as one of the methods of raising social production, but as the only method of producing fully developed human beings." It was a similar spirit which animated John Dewey's early demands for an "industrial education." This was an effort to achieve a new universality to replace that of "aristocratic education," a new unity in the school oriented to the democratic and cooperative society supposedly emerging outside. As it developed, however, vocational training is, in its most essential features, alien to this goal. It produces no insight into the workings of industry and machinery; it discovers no meaningful relationship between work and study or between science and technology. It provides only a narrow training in special skills, and since even this is not a shared learning, it yields no new social unity, but instead introduces into the school the invidious distinctions which prevail in a class society. The recent

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proposals to treat all education as vocational training, to insist that the knowledge of intellectual, worker, manager and businessman is nothing but "skill" in its various aspects, and thus to generate a feeling and an appearance of equality—these proposals would tend to destroy whatever still remains of our unified cultural heritage. They would not so much end invidious distinctions, which are still enforced by society, but all distinction whatsoever, and something of that ought to be upheld by the school.

V

The culture of modern society is not yet a *universal* culture. This is probably the most immediate critique which can be leveled against Dewey's vision: its essential component does not exist. But there is a further criticism and a further danger. The perenially unexpected surrender of the school to the pressures of a utilitarian, acquisitive and philistine world has resulted in the appearance of a new "universality" on a far lower level, a distorted, but still a possible, substitute for Dewey's vision. This new universality is the immediate effect of industrialization; to this transforming process education has responded, and far more to this than to radical aspiration or reforming humanitarianism.

It is the historical development of industrialization which requires and to a significant degree produces that limited literacy which is characteristic of modern society. Even this is a literacy which comes too late, for new inventions in mass communications have probably made the written word politically and culturally irrelevant to the mass of men. But what men learn by listening and watching only parallels and reinforces the discoveries of their limited literacy. It is as if the senses themselves are restrained and restricted by the machines that serve them. Through these machines, men are admitted to the world of limited equality, of rough cultural uniformity. This is the spurious world of mass perception which seeks to replace both individual insight and common sense. It is not a world created by the men who endure it. Literacy and equality, in the mutilated forms we know them today, are things that *happen* to people. Because they are passive in nature, these conditions co-exist with their historical opposites. Without establishing classlessness, industrialization has brought a considerable sharing in a new culture, commercially produced for a mass of consumers. Without destroying the power of class position, it has led, through the sheer overwhelming production of cultural commodities, to a gradual homogenization of the mind. Equality and conformity, culture and *kitsch,* political power and political powerlessness: these opposites are merged so that language itself seems deceitful.

Because industrialization is an active, transforming process, it leads to the new schooling, it creates a "progressive" character. The most significant elements of this character have been the attack upon "aristocratic education," the championship of vocational training, the demand for a harmonious relationship between the school and the new

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industrial society. In all these respects, Progressive Education has served as one of the key ideologies of modern industrialization. Quite aside from the philosophy of John Dewey, often, indeed, a distortion of his philosophy, this ideology requires examination.

It has, first of all, its better half, and this is closely related to one of the most beneficent effects of industrialization: the freeing of the child from labor. The movement organized in Dewey's name restored a certain radical élan to education by assimilating the child to the category of oppressed classes. Newly freed from drudgery, he was to be freed also from all the restrictions of Victorian patriarchal society and of its parallel, the authoritarian school. His education was to be adjusted to his natural growth, assimilated to his natural experiences, indeed, even to his play. All this was a good thing easily carried too far. The romanticizing of the child came to parallel in a rather disturbing way the romanticizing of the worker: both are examples of that middle-class condescension which so oddly combines with self-hatred. But the treatment of the worker had its obvious historical rationale: he was to be admitted for the first time in history to an equal role in political society; in fact he was to seize that role himself and, to a considerable extent, justify his characterization. The child, however, had by no means freed himself; he had been the beneficiary (and the benefits were often great) of the adult attack upon Victorianism. That was an attack—it should be remembered—which could only have been made on the basis of adult consciousness.

To make the school child-centered, it has been argued, is to alter somewhat the total reliance of the school upon society. But this is simply not true; it is precisely the child who carries society into the school. For, whatever can be said of his teachers, he at least is a social being, the member of a family, of a gang, who watches television and goes to the movies. The school can no more rely upon its students for its standards than it can upon its environment. As it cannot passively reflect the transient concerns and values of society, so it cannot simply set the child "free." Education involves an effort to direct development; that is its nature. The question is only: upon what basis? That basis can only be the standards which intelligent adults establish in culture and morality.

Precisely these standards have sometimes been called into doubt in the name of progressive education. The denunciation of bourgeois art and literature which frequently accompanied the romantic view of the worker was paralleled here in the renunciation of adult authority. Both are equally absurd and yet both have their point: these critiques of objective and authoritative or even traditional standards in culture and knowledge, whether originating in a false politics or a false psychology, serve to pave the way for the new "equality" of industrial society. For the child himself sets no standards. To fit education into the necessarily limited world of his experience is to limit systematically the broadening of that experience through adult guid-

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ance. The student is thus saved any contact at all with the strange, the disagreeable, the incongruous; he grows up in a world of likeness and nearness, and it is in this world that equality is translated into conformity. The same purpose is served by the attack of the progressives not only on the "aristocrats" but on the content of their culture. This is not an attack of the *avant-garde,* for no new content of equal or superior value is offered. This is a "middle-brow" attack and its effect is to make it extremely difficult to oppose from within the school that commercial culture which develops outside. Deprived of any sense of an objective body of knowledge defining their activity, the schools are unable to resist the insistent pressure of *kitsch.* They would be equally unable to resist political pressure.

Perhaps the key to the ideological nature of Progressive Education was its persistent emphasis on harmony. For true education is fundamentally rooted in two natural and inevitable conflicts: first, between age and authority on the one hand, and youth and freedom on the other; second, between knowledge and reality. It is hardly possible to train free men without allowing them to experience these antagonisms; it is only with such experience that freedom becomes self-conscious. By insisting on the harmony of school and student, the progressives would have prevented the child from ever being a rebel; by insisting on the harmony of school and society, they would have prevented his ever being a revolutionary.

VI

It is necessary to talk of objectivity and of conflict: these two ideas provide at least the context within which a radical answer to the problems of education might be developed. In the past, when culture and knowledge were the possessions of the ruling classes, authoritative and traditional values provided a defense of the *status quo.* Revolutionary doctrines were usually historical, relativistic, corrosive of established ideas and artistic standards. Today the "equality" of industrial society, a rough cultural and political uniformity, is the key to the authority of those men who still exercise authority. The ideas of the masses are essentially the ideas of these men, sponsored by them, perpetrated, as it were, by them—and not escaped by their perpetrators. These ideas are utterly dependent upon the denial, even the destruction of value. The intellectual basis of power today is deliberate and controlled confusion, a refusal to recognize distinctions moral or intellectual, an acceptance of all theories and positions, a rejection of all theories and positions. Among students, the response to this confusion is most often simply silence; this is a silence dictated by the widespread feeling that there is nothing to be said or done that can have any degree of certainty or conviction in it.

To insist upon objective values today is to become a social critic. And that is a position which radicals and conservatives sometimes uneasily share. The radical, however, hopes that he can share his values more widely and make his objectivity the basis for equality in society.

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He is bold enough to suggest that the "mass man" of the modern world, if he is ever to be just *man* again, requires the same knowledge as did the aristocrat or the capitalist. He may rebel against it—or its creators —but that rebellion at least would be his own, and its effect upon the inherited body of learning and culture would not be destruction, but preservation and invigoration.

Democracy in education, the radical argues, consists in the stubborn, persistent effort to make knowledge and culture, or at least the access to them, as universal as possible. It has nothing to do with the adjustment of knowledge or culture to the supposed or anticipated needs or interests of the mass of men, or of society; in a democracy such an adjustment closes the circle against intellectual progress. The young must continually test themselves against the best and most authoritative values that age knows. The purpose of learning is the reception, assimilation and judgment of these values. Let the student struggle against them if he must; let him escape them if he can: we can depend upon his ingenuity. But the commitment of the adult, of the teacher, if it is honest, ought to be made clear. New methods of teaching may be necessary to educate victims of centuries of inequality, or to reach students of greater and lesser mental capacities; here there must be continual experiment. But the ideas with which all must wrestle, in one form or another, are the same.

DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION involves a two-fold opposition to the conditions of contemporary America, and this is an opposition which we would do well to recognize and admit. It is possible only if teachers insist upon the integrity of their subjects, only if they discover within their history, English or physics standards of excellence and value. And if they make such discoveries, they must share them. First, the schools must aim at reaching the underprivileged, and with the same "facts" which the privileged are taught. Almost inevitably, this implies conflict between school and home, and resistance, discouragement, even delinquency on the part of the child. These can be alleviated by an intelligent and sympathetic teacher; socially, the levels on which conflict is expressed may be raised; but finally, struggle and discouragement are the immediate price we pay in order to confront class society with equality and cultural value. Young socialists in England have written movingly of how a state-educated working class boy can "never go home again." The point, however, is not to educate a handful of outcasts—though even that may prove a necessary beginning—but to reach a whole class.

At the same time as the schools seek to extend their reach, they must also defend that body of knowledge which they represent. This effort, again *necessarily,* will bring them into conflict with the commercialized vulgarity of American culture. Those who would "adjust" the child to society would also introduce *kitsch* into the schools. Indeed, it is there already. *Kitsch* can be resisted, but resistance is by no means the easiest path; success can only be limited. It is still possible, how-

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ever, to suggest a more interesting, a more valuable, a more profound alternative.

Finally, we must realize that inequality and cultural corruption have to be fought in every area of modern life and not only in the schools. We cannot depend upon our children to act like human beings unless we first teach them how human beings ought to act. And that means that the education of children is ultimately dependent upon the politics and morality of adults.

ISSUES AND GOALS IN THE DEBATE

Melvin Tumin

That we are, as a nation, engaged in a great public debate about education is quite evident. It is equally evident that this debate would be most salutary if it were being conducted with adequate knowledge on all sides, and more important, with a common concern for the common welfare. Most evident of all is that enormous passion is being wasted on phony moral judgments, heated assertions of untruths, and unthoughtful denials of viable alternatives.

What stands in the way of a clear statement of the real issues? The fact, above all, that the litigants bring very different sets of intentions to the forum and hence end with very different recommendations. No wonder, then, that there is little joining of issues. For the question whether the schools are doing a good job can be answered with both a vehement "yes" and a vehement "no," depending upon what one thinks the schools should be doing, and upon the related sets of values which one is willing or not willing to sacrifice in behalf of these educational ends.

Thus, if it could conceivably be true that the primary goal of American educational policy was to train enough people to staff Admiral Rickover's crew of technicians, and all such future and analogous crews, it follows quite properly that the educational system is not functioning as well as it might.

If it were true that the primary purpose of the educational system is to serve as the para-military training school for future combat with the Soviet Union, then the claimants on that side have been too feeble in their criticisms of American education. From this point of view, entirely too much time is being wasted in American schools on such useless things as literature, history, social studies, and even on those aspects of mathematics and science not directly relevant to military technology. And entirely too many people are being sent through the

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school system, when they might more properly be serving as stewards, valets and chambermaids, to minimize the hours which the "gifted" need to spend on these fringe aspects of their development.

Similarly, if it were true, as the most egregious extremists among the professional educators have been claiming, that the proper function of education is systematically to fit children at whatever their tested level of capacity into the context of social life, then entirely too much time is being wasted on academic and vocational subjects in a curriculum which keeps children at a childish level for about 10 years. These children would then be better off at work, and, in their spare hours, attending more frequently the mass rallies at which are peddled the nostrums by which the bad life is made to smell good for a moment before its rancidness comes through nice and strong. And they would be far better off if they were out discovering what it means to work for a living under reasonably bad conditions, with inadequate self-direction, inadequate pay, continuously lowering horizons of life possibilities and the regular exercise of misplaced authority.

Nor are all the extremists mere popular journalists and embroiled admirals. For now they are joined by authoritarians in the guise of lovers of mankind and élitists in the guise of democrats. For instance, Hannah Arendt recently insisted in an article in *Partisan Review,* that only in America could a crisis in education actually become a factor in politics, and that in America education plays a different, and politically an incomparably more important role than in other countries. No politics in education in England, of course, where the cut-off point of 11 years (decided 30 years ago as a convenience to teachers of modern languages) separates sheep from goats more surely than the Lord's hand ever was able to. Nor is education a matter of politics in France, where control of the public school system has been a matter of internal warfare for fifty years, nor in Russia, where the school system is a direct arm of the political bureau, nor in Latin American countries, where the schools and universities are the concrete bastions used by revolutionary students. All of these cases are somehow unpolitical, apolitical, and, at best, politically unimportant.

Or, to follow Miss Arendt further, in her "history" of progressive education: "What in Europe has remained an experiment, tested out here and there in single schools and isolated educational institutions, and then gradually extending its influence in certain quarters, in America about 25 years ago completely overthrew, as though from one day to the next, *all* traditions and *all* the established methods of teaching and learning." "I shall not go into details," continues Miss Arendt. *Indeed not.* "The significant fact is that for the sake of certain theories, good or bad, *all* the rules of sound human reason were thrust aside." (My italics—MT.)

No more need be cited from Miss Arendt, whose contributions to political philosophy and social action have recently been discussed in another DISSENT forum, except to note that her nostrum is not unlike

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that of the good Admiral, or Congressman Carrol Reece. Their common remedy is: Authority, more authority and still more authority.

II

If I have seemed to dwell unduly upon the nonsense issuing from the most vituperative critics, rather than the defenders, of the school system, it is not out of any greater simpathy for either extreme but rather out of the realization that the educationists are pushovers in a public argument, however firmly entrenched they may be in private infighting. And the critics, endorsed by much vulgar crowd sentiment, have been able to disguise the flimsiness of their arguments by cloaking them in stern warnings about the national defense, the history of our country the urgency of common sense, and the love of excellence. All appealing slogans. But if the schools need to be stripped of the slogans which hide their incompetencies, so do the critics need to be denuded of theirs.

So we must ask now whether and in what regards it is proper to talk of a crisis in education. And we must ask, if we correctly describe such a crisis, in what ways we can proceed, within the limits of reasonable resources, to reduce the critical elements in the situation, and to provide for the kind of development in education which will come to meet more adequately our expectations.

Let me state first what issues I think are *not* critical, at least not in the highest sense of the word, however problematic they may be and however demanding it may be that they be rectified.

I do not think it critical that we match the Soviet rocket for rocket and technician for technician. In this regard I am unfortunately joined by such a luminary theorist as Dwight Eisenhower. But at least some ideas can continue to merit respectful consideration, no matter who their partisans may be.

As John Gardner has said in his forward to Dr. Conant's new book on the American high schools:

> The surge of publicity about Soviet schools has produced more false impressions and foolish conclusions than almost any other element in current discussions of education. Sensible generalizations about Russian schools are made doubly difficult by the recent switches in Soviet educational policy. The future direction of Russian education is not clear. And even if we knew exactly where Soviet education was going, the information would be of limited relevance. It is impossible to evaluate an educational system apart from the society which it both reflects and serves. Mr. Conant understands this and he has repeatedly emphasized that American education must keep its eye on its own goals and be strong in its own terms.

It is perhaps not too strange that we need Mr. Gardner to remind us that education is one aspect of a total social system; that the direction and content of education must reflect the commonly shared po-

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litical and social goals of the society; that it would be no difficulty whatsoever to outrun the Soviet, if we wished, by the simple expedient of becoming a totalitarian society. But it is a reminder that we may well repeat over and over again.

Nor do I think it critical that one third of the teachers of the nation come out of teachers' colleges, and that approximately one fourth of their curricula are given over to methodology, psychology and administration (not "almost totally," as Rickover falsely claims in his St. Albans speech). What *is* critical, by contrast, is that two-thirds of the teachers come out of schools of education and departments of education which are formally under the control of liberal arts faculties and deans who, with the utmost impropriety, have disdained to exercise their proper jurisdictions over courses and standards. Partly, perhaps importantly, this is due to the fact that in so doing they might call attention to the mediocrity of many of their own offerings.

Nor is it critical that so many high schools in the country apparently fail to include in their curricula the subjects we ordinarily associate with a good liberal education. For the facts are not as usually stated. For instance, while it is true that 11 percent of the high schools of the country offer no biology courses in the tenth grade, this accounts for only 3.3 percent of the high school students in the tenth grade. Or, while it is true that in 23 percent of the schools neither physics nor chemistry are offered in the 11th and 12th grades, these schools account for less than 6 percent of all the students enrolled at those levels. Or, while it is true that more than half the high schools in the country offer no modern language, these schools include only about 10 percent of all the high school students in the country.

Nor is it critical, in and of itself, that the so-called gifted children of the nation are failing to receive a proper education, because, as put, this is an absolutely untestable and probably unwarranted statement. What is in fact true, and far more critical, is that for every one child who graduates high school and goes on to college, *there is at least one other child, who, though equally qualified, on both aptitude and achievement scores, does not go on to college.* If there is a crisis here, then, it is perhaps as much a function of a class-biased mode of selection for further education, whatever its quality, as is it a function of the so-called low quality of education given to the undemocratically selected minority that does go on to college.

Nor again may we properly say that the gifted are being mistreated, unless simultaneously we declare that the less gifted are, at their own levels of competence, being systematically short-changed in both the total social process and the particular educational process to which they are exposed. It is strange to see the frequency with which former and *soi-disant* socialists and democrats join hands with elitists of various stripes to promote a clamor about the mistreatment of the excellent and the gifted, only pausing most occasionally and hurriedly to acknowledge the fact that *the strength of any society depends, in the best*

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senses of the term, on the maximum discovery, motivation, recruitment and training of all levels of manpower to their fullest expression.

III

There is here a kind of calculus of social energy about which none of us is wise enough. How shall we calibrate the prices we are willing to pay—in morale, loyalty, alienation, rates of pathological disorder—for the presumed profits of continuing to discriminate at virtually every level of schooling on the basis of direct and indirect effects of class origins?

If it can be shown that the rate of Negro infant mortality in New York City is almost twice that of white infants, how much of a price is that and is it worth paying for the continuation of the present system of class recruitment of the successful, the wealthy, the healthy and the educated?

If it can be shown that of every 100 major crimes known to the police, some 3 or 4 end up in imprisonment, and that the average victim happens to be a grammar-school-educated Negro caught out of his own neighborhood—what does this tell us about the selective benefits of education and of the screening process by which the more "gifted" members of the population accrue for themselves a disproportionate exemption from the consequences of their acts?

If, further, as the most recent data suggest, cancer and mental disorders selectively strike lower class persons, how much of a price is this compared to the possible benefits for even further emphasis upon the so-called excellent?

If, finally, for our purposes here, it can be shown—as indeed it can—that every step upward on the educational ladder is accompanied by some matching step up the ladders of income, leisure, luxury, and exposure to the best which our culture has to offer, is this price worthy of being paid, in even more differentiated form in years to come, on behalf of the cult of excellence? Must one suffer being called an enemy of excellence and an advocate of mediocrity, if he insists on calling attention to the prices which one pays when in our education system we substitute, for the aristocracy of birth, which former social revolutions took so long to overthrow, an aristocracy of talent?

And is it not painfully and patently true that there is today no true equality of opportunity to have one's talents discovered, and to be motivated to train those talents, and then to locate them most advantageously in the division of labor? Is it not further true that when such equality of opportunity is absent, the so-called aristocracy of talent is an aristocracy of *discovered* talent? And is it not true, finally, that the discovery process is geared systematically into the structure of class inequality?

These questions suggest that the aims of education one posits, the critiques of education in which one indulges, the extent to which one senses a crisis, and the terms in which one defines that crisis depend

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most importantly upon one's values regarding what social life should be like in general, and on one's presuppositions regarding what is equality and justice in human social relations. Professor Sidney Hook has averred that a great deal of agreement on curricula can be garnered among even the most philosophically-opposed adversaries, by the willing though temporary suspension of philosophical disagreement and the temporary adoption of a posture of philosophical neutralism, until the areas of agreement have been explored. This sounds beguiling. Perhaps as a temporary expedient for boards of education, under pressure of concrete and powerful political forces, a good deal of *nominal* agreement may thereby be secured. But I fear that the nominal agreement may be just that and no more, and may at best be limited to minor curricula revisions, and these only nominal. I am mindful of the fact, for instance, that both the Catholic Church and the most ardent advocates of separation of church and state are agreed on the importance of separation of church and state—in name. But in fact, the translations of these unspecific mottoes end up, on the one hand, in an advocacy of support of parochial education with public funds, and, on the other hand, in an insistence that no public funds should be so diverted.

I am suggesting in short that we cannot properly join issues in this great public debate if we pose only one set of curricula against the other, one set of teacher training institutes against another, or one set of slogans about the aims of education against another. For we may find that there is precious little real agreement, when we operationally translate our slogans, aims and curricular titles into ongoing relationships between teacher and student and school and community.

Let me now therefore try to pull together my remarks by enumerating a number of the basic issues which confront us in education today and which I see as critical. I see these as critical from a particular point of view. It is that of the person who stands on the following assumptions:

1. Maximum equality of opportunity—at virtually whatever cost—is the *sine qua non* of a democratic society.
2. Maximum training of all levels of talent up to their own natural limits is the *sine qua non* of a democratic society.
3. The schools are the primary agencies of social mobility.
4. Maximum mobility is desirable.
5. The life and quality of our culture depend in the last analysis on the sound democratic functioning of our schools.
6. We have no decent factual basis on which to stand with regard to the distribution of talent in the population other than that there is probably available in every class segment an equally wide and diverse range of abilities which are capable of being equally recruited and equally motivated to conscientious performance only under conditions of equal life situations.

Two further assumptions may be stated before defining the ingredients of the crisis in the education. The first insists that at any

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given moment in its history a nation discovers itself to be faced with certain problems for which collectively it is responsible. Where this refers to the disadvantaged position and undesired behavior of certain historically underprivileged segments of the population, then, the nation has no moral choice than to chart its rates and directions of development so as to enable those underprivileged segments to catch up, even, if need be, at the cost of growth of other segments.

The second of these final assumptions is the utterly trite yet urgently correct observation that social gains always involve some social prices.

IV

Now then to the summary statement. The crisis in American education today is defined by the following features of American life in general and American schools in particular.

1. A persistent unwillingness on the part of the American public to pay the taxes necessary even for the minimal discharge of those obligations they now expect of the schools, not to mention those larger expectations they have under the impetus of the recent attacks upon the educational system.

2. Intolerably low salaries and prestige for teachers, resulting in the continuing lowering of the level of personnel recruited for the teaching profession.

3. The desertion by the community, the family and the agencies of social welfare of many of their responsibilities and the fobbing off of these upon the schools and teachers, so that the school system has frequently to function as everything from a free breakfast canteen for undernourished children to the agent of moral and social discipline. The eagerness with which the schools not only accept but go out of their way to seek these new responsibilities is one of the most shocking, albeit understandable, aspects of the crisis.

4. The exploitation by various community agencies of the talents, time and energies of school children, for non-school activities, resulting in serious attrition of the available time for study and free play.

5. A fundamentally low level of knowledge and thought about, and active participation in, the major issues confronting local school systems. This is true not only of those relatively uneducated segments of the community that have most at stake, but also of those relatively educated segments that promote their own parochial stakes with vigor.

6. A systematic failure to consider education as a *social* system, and the attendant failure to recognize the numerous and significant ways in which teacher, pupil, parent, superintendent, principal and boards of education are interlocked in a series of mutual dependencies. The result is subversion of the proper structure of power, authority and decision-making regarding school policies.

7. An egregious emphasis on the cult of success, defined at least partly in terms of occupational position and income. These are seen, for the

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better off, as best achieved in the educational process, and through quick exit to the factories for the worse off. This leads to built-in false values in teacher-pupil relationships, and to a strengthening and hardening of class arteries.

8. A systematized demotivation of all levels of the school population by the doctrines of "play it safe" and "play it cool," tied integrally to the goals of adjustment, bovine-like happiness, and peace of mind. Here parents and teachers participate perhaps equally with the students.

9. A failure to place equal value upon and to reward equally for: (1) excellence, and (2) performance up to the level of ability, whatever the absolute level of excellence or mediocrity this may be. This is symbolic of the failure of the doctrine of the "equal worth of all men," by which we ought simply and easily to be guided in our actions so that we never make the mistake of punishing those whose native talents are low, for the facts of their birth, nor reward those whose native talents are high, for the facts of their birth.

10. A resolute unwillingness—however understandable—by the extremists on both sides of the issue to admit shortcomings; to examine their positions; to explore possible areas of agreement; to face the facts; to stop being defensive; and to be willing to debate responsibly in public rather than organize privately against each other.

If I have here omitted numerous details the reasons of space are obvious. I have thus chosen not to mention such matters as Conant's recommendations regarding different standards for required and elective courses; or the possible revolutionary implications of such experiments with small classes as have recently been reported in the press; or the problems facing teachers in the occasional jungles which some schools prove to be, in which to maintain discipline is difficult enough, without hope that any educational content will be transmitted; or the problems raised by the psychic deficits which students import into the schools and what can happen to the best of intentions, teachers and curricula under the impact of the explosive expression of these feelings.

Finally, let me call your attention to a clarification of the issues which is presented with succinct brilliance in a document entitled *The Child and the Curriculum.* The author ends his brief 30-page analysis with the following statement:

> The case is of the Child. It is his present powers which are to assert themselves; his present capacities which are to be exercised; his present attitudes which are to be realized. But save as the teacher knows, knows wisely and thoroughly, the race-expression which is embodied in that thing we call the Curriculum, the teacher knows neither what the present power, capacity, or attitude is, nor yet how it is to be asserted, exercised, and realized.

That was written in 1902 by John Dewey.

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CUBA'S REVOLT — AN APPRAISAL

Livio C. Stecchini

I went to Cuba at a time when, by the standards of the daily press, nothing important was taking place: there was only the build-up for the crisis expected after the November 1958 election. Not until later did the correspondents and TV characters begin to descend on Cuba. This sudden influx surprised the many Cubans who know English, since for months they had the peculiar feeling that they were living in limbo: most American papers simply ignored the revolution and the name of Cuba was never mentioned on the newscasts from American radio stations that are heard on the island. It was this silence which helped persuade many Cubans that the "Americans" were against the Castro revolt.

About the position of the U.S. government, the Cubans had no doubt. When I drove to small towns in the interior, where a car with U.S. plates was a rarity, a little crowd would quickly gather; after a few minutes of casual talk, some of the people, for mysterious reasons, would feel reassured that I was not a plant of the dreaded S.I.M. [secret police] and would dare ask the fatal question: "Why does the American government support Batista?"

For Cubans this was a painful question, since nowhere else in the world is there so much sympathy, at all social levels, for American ways and institutions. One does not hear those snide remarks about American barbarism that are dropped by European conservatives who have, at the same time, sold themselves body and soul to American foreign policy. Indeed, the Cuban revolution can be regarded as an outcome of a fifty-year-old "Americanization." Many Cubans try to spend a year or two in the States as part of their training for business or a trade; wealthy Cubans send their children to American universities. Ninety percent of what is printed is either American or a translation from American. The impact is reflected even in the language where not only is one word in ten or twenty English but even the grammar and idioms are often modeled on American speech.

In their desire to be like Americans, the Cubans have made a great effort to become practical, efficient, business-like; the Castro rebellion was a marvel of organization. Its leaders were men who learned American technical efficiency and tried to organize their movement in its spirit; whereas it is no accident that the drifters, scum or wretches, who comprised Batista's army did not know what to do with their elaborate U.S. equipment. But the Cubans have learned not only about air conditioning and TV; they have come passionately to believe in the democracy American preaches.

PORFIRIO DIAZ is reported to have said that the problem with Mexico is

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that it is too far from God and too near the United States. Cuba, by contrast, is even closer to the United States but no longer quite a God-forsaken country. There is poverty in Cuba, but nothing like the mass misery of Mexico. Little Cuba is in the process of liberating itself from a colonial status; Mexico at present is in a somnolent state. With the proper development and administration, Cuba could be the first Latin American country to reach a living standard that could approach the American one.

Meanwhile, it is true, the number of employed comes to ten percent of the population; but there are also signs of prosperity. Let me cite a few indices. The production of tires in Cuba is greater than in Brazil or Argentina. A recent development of the cattle and dairy industries indicates that the diversification of agriculture can advance rapidly. There are now capable agronomists in Cuba who know how to exploit the possibilities of a fertile soil. (Part of the unemployment is the result of a mechanization of the farms.) At the present price of newsprint, the recently-begun production of paper as a by-product of sugar cane promises to be profitable. Trade with Germany and Japan is growing and could make the Cuban economy more flexible by reducing its dependence on the American market.

The economy has thus started to take first steps toward modernization, one sign of which—it has both attractive and dangerous possibilities—is the recent influx of private capital from abroad. Nor are the foreign capitalist interests entirely of the colonial type; there is now a growing number of subsidiaries of American companies that produce mainly for the local market.

Nevertheless, the Cuban economy remains essentially a nineteenth century economy, and together with it there has developed a bourgeoisie with nineteenth century ideals. The recent Cuban revolution is the expression of the Cuban bourgeoisie as it has come into its own. Both the strength and weakness of the revolution is that its moving force is the "best people"—lawyers, doctors, capable landowners, local enterpreneurs. The bourgeois ideals of the revolutionists are reflected in some aspects that to an outsider may seem ludicrous, such as their extreme concern with gambling, night clubs and prostitution. I was constantly struck by the straight-laced conceptions expressed by middle-class Cubans, especially the younger ones. Nobody casts a doubt on the virtue of the women who shared the adventurous life of the men in the rebel bands. Cuba, sick of the enormous and systematized corruption of the Batista regime, is, for the moment at least, in the grip of asceticism. This is the ethos of a bourgeoisie in formation, a bourgeoisie as it existed in the first half of the nineteenth century: austere, devoted to the family no less than to patriotic and philosophical ideals, increasingly productive in economy and on the verge of becoming a cultured class.

I WENT TO Cuba because over the years I had become disappointed with revolutionary ideas and experience. Selfishly I wanted to share the exhilaration that comes from living by hope and desire before the dawn of reality. But at first I thought I would miss even that, since what I heard expressed as political programs seemed to me not hopes but the sheerest dreams. It reminded me of the July

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1830 revolution in France, a revolution that was the expression of truly educated minds and which I, as an intellectual, have always been especially fond of. But July 1830 also forces one to reflect upon the distance between literary salon and social reality.

In Cuba there was this "French" element of high political idealism and moral rhetoric; but there was also something else, something more substantial.

The strategic turning point of the Cuban revolution occurred in August 1958 when a group of students originally independent of Castro established themselves in the Mountains of Trinidad, in the center of the island. They were desperately in need of weapons and only later, and at great risk, did Castro supply them by sea. Batista tried to dislodge these students from that small mountain area, but failed; and once he failed it was the beginning of the end.

The public began to expect the push to divide the island in two, which became a reality in December. Batista was only playing for time, hoping to force Castro into some sort of deal that would salvage something of his position and some of his men; the American Embassy was also trying to arrange a compromise, perhaps with the sincere belief that it was thereby taking a neutral position. There were opponents of Batista who thought Castro stubborn and unrealistic, because he refused any deal and announced that he would march into Havana—which seemed a manifest impossibility, since the success of such a march would depend on a general strike in the city and the workers did not have a sufficiently strong motivation for taking that risk.

Not long ago I was in Trinidad when the entire city was in the grip of terror, fearing indiscriminate reprisals, because fifteen boys had just taken to the mountains. There was silence in the streets and the rare pedestrians walked close to the walls, as if that made it safer. In my search for the spirit of the young men I walked through the empty halls of the high school where the Revolutionary Committee of Students had its inception before the government had halted all classes; rosters were still clipped on the walls and essays lay scattered on the floor. In spite of the danger many were eager to enlighten me: they were anxious that the world should know about a struggle in which they took pride as evidence of Cuba's maturity. But I was perplexed because of the lack of specific social demands.

Only later, as I was leaving the city at a good rate of speed (since I had been advised not to be on the road after sunset), did I come to realize that I was here confronted with a faith in the power of constitutional processes and an optimism about progressive social improvement that has hardly been heard of since the Victorian age. An indirect proof of this could be seen in the fact that many Mexican newspapers are unsympathetic to the new Cuban government. The explanation, I suspect, is that Mexico, where everybody is imbued with revolutionary language and where the middle class defends its privileges in the name of Marxist slogans, cannot understand the nineteenth century spirit of the Cuban revolution.

The wealthiest supporter of the rebels I happened to meet, an owner of sugar mills, made no mystery of his social and racial prejudices; but having expounded Ortega y Gasset's theory

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of the revolt of the masses, he concluded that the vocation of our time is nonetheless the recognition of the masses. However we may judge them, such people are self-confident in their bourgeois values; they feel that with intelligence they can preserve them and at at the same time satisfy the social demands of a rising working class. When one remembers previous revolutions which at their inception were characterized by the kind of national *elan* that has swept over Cuba, and remembers too that after a time class interests began to reappear and come into conflict, there is ground for misgiving. Yet it would be a mistake to suppose that history must always repeat itself, for in Cuba today there are possibilities which did not exist in previous national revolutions.

ONE OF THE revolutionists' very first gestures was to clean up such streets as the Street of Virtues in Havana. No doubt, this cannot have a lasting effect so long as there is unemployment and so long as waitresses are paid two dollars a day while the cost of living is higher than our own. The result must be that the expelled women will ply their trade in streets with less pertinent names. Yet the gesture was not as hypocritical as it may seem: it means that one now believes that certain social evils cannot be tolerated and are a sign of a universal failure.

The supporters of the revolution knew that they had also to overcome the skepticism of the workers. Their land reform program had originated as a pragmatic measure, since one cannot conduct a partisan war without the support of the peasantry. Establishing a program that would appeal to the workers, however, was a much more difficult task for the Castro revolution, since such a program did not come to them from immediate experience. Batista was a man who came from the masses and, like many other modern demagogues, knew how to speak to and for them. Few of the new leaders have this gift.

Precisely because the revolution has such a definite middle class coloring does the personality of Castro become all important, for among his other roles, he is the mediator between the revolution as an active force and the working class as an interested observer. He is the man who can touch the heart of the masses and who can also touch the heart of those who will have to touch their pocket books. Castro likes to compare himself with Bolivar, but I think the more apt comparison is with Garibaldi, since it was Garibaldi who could establish contact between the masses and the bourgeois nationalists of the Risorgimento.

Garibaldi, it will be recalled, resigned his position as dictator of Southern Italy to which he had been brought by a popular revolt, when England arranged an agreement between the former supporter of the Bourbon King of Naples and the House of Savoy. When Garibaldi tried to act again he was arrested by the government and up to his death lived a life of exile on the craggy island of Caprera.

Now it may be that Castro will yet have a similar destiny, but the general political outcome can hardly be the same, since everyone in Cuba is aware of a new historical factor: the Communist Party, at the moment a small group but in case the Castro movement were to collapse, a potentially powerful force. I found in Cuba a firm belief that the age in which social problems could be ignored had

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come to an end: a belief that if these problems were not soon solved in a substantial manner by the heirs of nineteenth century liberalism, they would be solved in the Soviet style. This opinion is shared even by a section of the Catholic clergy, despite the fact that it is Spanish or Spanish-trained. The spirit of political liberalism that accompanies the present demand for social reforms is so strong that the Catholic clergy, instead of engaging in the campaigns of intolerance well-known in South America, is even cooperating with the Protestants, who have a certain influence in Cuba. So, for the time being, nothing is being said against the divorce laws, which the middle class has come to consider an established part of its mores. For the time being, that is, there reigns a spirit of good will toward everyone but profiteers of the Batista regime.

CLEARLY ONE OF THE greatest concerns of the Cubans today is the attitude of the United States. Not because they are worried about the marines, who in the post-Sputnik age can be told to go jump in the Caribbean. They are concerned about the danger that Congress may cut the sugar quota —though even here they are not utterly at a loss, since it is conceivable that Khrushchev might then offer to buy Cuban sugar. What the Cubans are trying to understand is why the U.S. should not give support to an experiment to make democratic liberalism work in the twentieth century.

The first reaction of the American press and radio was to raise an outcry against the trials of some of Batista's gunmen; the Philadelphia *Inquirer* described Castro as a "bloodthirsty dictator." More recently, the revolutionists, because of their beards, have been portrayed as rather amusing hipsters. But all of this is to ignore the fact that the men about Castro, though young, are deadly serious, convinced that they are living in a deadly serious world, where one mistake can mean the end.

The outcry against the trials and executions of Batista's supporters raised by people who up to that day had shown total indifference about what was happening to Cubans, is a gesture of moral irresponsibility. This does not mean that the trials should not be a matter of concern at a responsible level. The best that can be said is that the revolutionists are neither bloodthirsty nor thoughtless. The Cuban government intends to press for the exclusion of dictatorships from the Organization of American States. But I doubt that the revolutionists will be able to prove themselves simon-pure liberals. As I have said, the revolution was motivated by a great faith in nineteenth century liberalism; but since 1848 one has been aware that this noble idea cannot encompass all the complexities of social conflict.

The issue is clear. The Communists have impressed upon the world that in a few decades any country can cease to be economically "underdeveloped." In Cuba a part of the population became tired of seeing their country politically "underdeveloped"; they will now need all possible help to make it also fully developed in its economic and social life. The great question is whether American policy, dominated by a fear of "chaos," will always aim at keeping such countries at a static point.

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The article which follows is a part of a chapter of Dr. Sternberg's forthcoming book, The Military and Industrial Revolution of Our Time, *to be published in the United States by Frederic A. Praeger, New York, as translated from the German by Edward Fitzgerald. Fritz Sternberg is the well-known author of other works which include* Imperialismus *(1926);* How to Stop the Russians Without War, *New York, 1948;* Capitalism and Socialism on Trial, *New York, 1951, etc. This is his first contribution to* DISSENT.—EDITORS

THE SECOND INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Fritz Sternberg

The first industrial revolution began in England, spread to the Continental mainland, and then crossed the Atlantic to the United States. Only generations later did it affect Russia, and even then only in part, whilst the peoples of Asia were hardly affected at all.

On the other hand, the industrial revolution of our time directly affects all the industrial nations of the West, and it naturally finds a much broader field of operations there than the first ever did, for it was with this first industrial revolution that industrialism really began. However, this second industrial revolution does not affect only the Western industrial nations, but the Soviet Union as well, and this means that—unlike the first—it is affecting various societies with various social structures; and these societies are striving in different ways and with different means to embody and digest its results.

In addition, the second industrial revolution affects not only the Western world and the Soviet Union, but also the peoples of Asia, and, though with a certain time lag, the peoples of Africa because it is taking place in what may be called the phase of world historical development, a phase in which, with the decline of colonial imperialism, the Asiatic and increasingly the African peoples too are becoming free, sovereign States and building up their own societies and their own economic systems.

The societies which existed in the days of the first industrial revolution developed the necessary organs to absorb and digest its *technical* achievements, but they hardly began to develop those organs necessary to cope with its *social* consequences. But in the 150 years approximately which have passed between the first and second industrial revolutions, decisive social changes have come about. The individual employer-capitalist no longer dominates the most important industries today as he did then. In fact, in the Western world these industries are

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now dominated by between 1,000 and 1,500 giant corporations. At the same time, the workmen employed in these industries are now organized in trade unions, and the trade union is so firmly established as part and parcel of our social structure that it is impossible to conceive of a democratic society without it. Further, for a variety of reasons the State sector is rapidly extending, and with it the general influence of the State on economic life is increasing. Further, today, in this period of the second industrial revolution, there is a far greater scientific understanding of the economic system.

We can, therefore, safely say that in the long period between the first and the second industrial revolutions the societies of the Western world developed social organs which they did not formerly possess. The important question for us now is whether these social organs are already strong enough, or can be made strong enough without great difficulty, to allow the societies of the Western world to absorb and digest not only the technical achievements of the second industrial revolution, but also to foresee and cope with its inevitable social consequences —something they were not in a position to do during the first industrial revolution.

What is the technical significance of this second industrial revolution, and what will the increasing introduction of automation which is part of it actually mean to industry? So far matters have not gone far enough for the experts to be able to agree on a clear formula.

We must first of all be clear about one thing: automation is not a new industry, and it is also not a new machine with previously unknown qualities.

It is rather a new technique which is gradually embracing a larger and larger part not only of industry proper but also of the administrative apparatus. To an increasing extent machines are being minded today not by human labor-power but by other machines. In other words, in this period of "automation" human labor-power is being progressively excluded from every industrial process from the raw material to the finished article.

The specific conditions of automation by comparison with the technical processes of the first industrial revolution have been analyzed by James B. Carey* as follows:

> The first industrial revolution, usually identified with Watt's steam engine, replaced animal and human muscle power with steam power and electric power; it replaced the handicraft worker with the machine tender or machine operator. Automation uses control devices that result in the automatic production and processing of goods and data; it tends to replace the human regulation and control of machines and thereby changes the machine operator into a supervisor of an automatically controlled operating system."

The Three Spheres of the Technical Revolution

The process of automation is extending to one industry after the other, but any definition which sought to confine the second in-

* *Automation and Technological Change,* United States Government Printing Office, Washington, 1955, p. 220.

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dustrial revolution to the mere process of automation would be too narrow. Above all, the second industrial revolution is proceeding parallel with the development of new sources of energy.

We can say, therefore, that the second industrial revolution is proceeding technically in three main fields:

1. The peaceful exploitation of atomic energy;
2. The partial and full automation of industrial production; and
3. Electronically controlled calculating machines which radically revolutionize office work.

This last field is particularly important sociologically because in all previous technical revolutions administrative and office work—and thus the men and women engaged in it—were very little affected.

The Peaceful Exploitation of Nuclear Energy

If we could review world history from the vantage point of the year 2000 we should far more easily recognize the importance of the new sources of energy than we can today.

The exploitation of atomic energy for peaceful purposes is introducing a new period in the technical revolution. Above all, the fear that at some time in the future human activities could be slowed down and perhaps seriously held up by a lack of energy has no longer any basis.

Since the days of the first industrial revolution right down into the Second World War man has found sources of energy in coal and oil, and other deposits formed by nature and stored in geological eras. The production of atomic energy is also based on a natural deposit, that of uranium, but the deposits of this mineral (and of thorium) already known to exist are so great that the energy requirements of mankind can be regarded as covered for at least a thousand years—and this takes no account of deposits still likely to be discovered.

Science and technique have not marked time, and their representatives are already busy in Europe, the United States and the Soviet Union in transforming those processes which led to the production of the hydrogen bomb into processes for the generation of energy for peaceful purposes. So far no definitive success on this particular field has been obtained, but there is every indication that it will be obtained in the future.

This would mean, however, that in this epoch of the second industrial revolution humanity would develop step by step towards a process hitherto performed by nature alone, namely, *the actual production of sources of energy.*

Still, we should not overestimate for the immediate future the significance of the peaceful use of atomic energy in the Western world, since at least until 1975 it will come to no more than 10 percent of all energy sources, and in some countries perhaps less.

In the United States, Great Britain, Western Europe and the Soviet Union, the production of atomic energy will remain only a supplementary source of energy in the foreseeable future; and this may

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still be the case in a period when atomic energy may be the main source for certain Asiatic countries. Here, once again, is an important sphere in which the classic development of industry as it took place in Britain, Europe and the United States may not be repeated in Asia; the Asiatic countries may well branch out in new directions.

Thus, although for a good while to come the peoples of the Western world will continue to use atomic energy only as a supplementary source of energy, and it will therefore not greatly affect their daily lives, the situation on the second field of the industrial revolution—automation—is very different.

The Extension of Automation

The process of automation began first in the United States and has made greater progress there than, for example, in Britain and Western Europe. Even in the comparatively few years in which automation has come to the fore it has already become very clear that the original estimates concerning its likely sphere of application were much too conservative. Today we can see that automation is making headway in more and more branches of trade and industry—so much so, in fact, that it is calling for rethinking of a kind that did not exist before automation was introduced.

The reason for these underestimates was that at first automatic processes were introduced into already existing factories in order to produce the same old products more efficiently. But as things developed, the products themselves were modified to facilitate the introduction of completely automatic production on a new basis. For example, this happened in the United States with the production of television and wireless sets.

But the thing did not stop at the automatic production of products which had been produced before—later on it became possible to produce new products on the basis of automation.

> It is now possible for us to control processes too sensitive for human control, and to handle materials whose very production would be impossible without automation. Polythene, which in a short time has become as common as glass as a container, is a good example. Without automation it simply could not be produced.*

Thus, the field of application of automatic processes has steadily widened in the past few years, and it will continue to widen in the future, particularly as automation is revolutionizing our ways of thought. Before automation was introduced, the factory and the office were not only physically separated, their ways of thought were different: the way of the management, the way of the clerical and administrative employee, and the way of the workman. With the introduction of automation a process has started which is tending to tear down the barriers between these separate categories of thought.

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* John Diebold, "Automation as a Challenge to Management," published in the UNESCO *Science Bulletin*, Vol. X, No. 1, 1958, p. 39.

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> Apart from some superficial and over-enthusiastic movements aimed at applying the efficiency engineering methods of modern factory production to the work of the office, there has been little real consideration of the plant and the office as essential and fundamental parts of the same whole. However, in the long run, automation is going to change the traditional distinction between plant and office, linking them together as a single, inter-connected system.•

Automation is absolutely essential for the production of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, owing to the great dangers of radio-activity. Without complete automation such production would not be possible at all, because from beginning to end, from the raw material to the finished product, the human hand must not be involved at all. Thus, the production of atomic energy for peaceful purposes is possible at all only because of the previous development of the process of automation, and at this point the two processes which make up the technical aspect of the second industrial revolution meet.

How big the automated sector may be in the foreseeable future, is suggested by the English magazine *The Economist* which writes that in England *40 per cent* of the people working in manufacturing may be in this sector. But this, it should be noted, comes to *only 15 per cent* of the English labor force. If to it we add a significant portion of office work as soon likely to come under automation, the total of affected workers for the foreseeable future comes to about 20 per cent of the labor force.

In the United States the number of working people who are directly affected by automation may be smaller than in Britain. For one thing, the number of persons engaged in agriculture in the United States is much greater than in Britain; and secondly, as a consequence of the great increase in labor productivity and of rising living standards for the great masses of the people, the so-called tertiary industries have developed much more quickly in the United States than they have in Britain, Western Germany and Europe in general. Therefore the percentage of working people in the United States who may ultimately be affected by automation may lie below the 20 per cent assumed for Great Britain.

One important point must be stressed here: certain circles are seeking to make light of the effect automation will have on the labor market. Not all branches of industry would be simultaneously affected, but first this branch and then that; and the introduction of automation would therefore extend over a period of years, so that at no time would its effect on the labor market be very disturbing.

However, these views are based on a false premise which overlooks the importance of industry for the economic system as a whole, including the tertiary industries, and fails to take into account the possibility of "secondary" unemployment as a result of automation. Let us assume that automation did result in considerable unemployment in those industries in which it was introduced; and then let us assume further that,

• John Diebold, *ibid.*, p. 39.

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perhaps in conjunction with other factors, economic setbacks were suffered—in that case unemployment would not remain confined to the industrial sector of the economic system, but would extend to the whole, affecting the tertiary industries as well.

Thus, when some people play down the possible effects of automation on the labor market on the ground that the process itself would be spread over years and would, in any case, affect directly not more than a fifth of those gainfully employed, they overlook the decisive point which is that although this process of automation may, in fact, not affect more than one-fifth of the total number of employed people, it may well have *secondary* effects far greater than its primary effects.

The Dangers of Automation

The continued automation of production could involve serious dangers for the economic and social system of the countries of the Western world, and we should not make light of such dangers merely because so far they have not been clearly demonstrated statistically.

With the first industrial revolution the working day was generally extended, night work increased, and so did the employment of female and child labor. Such dangers do not exist today—the idea of social welfare is far too strongly ingrained in our social life for that. However, there is a danger that unemployment might increase; there is a danger of increasing labor degradation for a big and important section of the working people, including both factory and office workers; there is a danger that the tendencies towards an economic crisis will increase; and finally, there is a danger that the concentration of political power will increase to such an extent as to threaten democratic institutions themselves.

Automation and Unemployment

Let us deal first with the more direct and immediate danger: the threat of unemployment. This arises with the introduction of automation just as it did with all previous technical revolutions, and for the same reason, namely, that improved technical processes reduce the total volume of labor power necessary so that the same volume of production can be obtained and distributed by a smaller number of producers.

The effects of automation on the labor market will vary greatly according to whether it is introduced in a phase of on the whole expanding economic development, or in a phase of stagnation, or perhaps in a phase when there is even economic decline.

The introduction of automation, which of its nature reduces the amount of labor power necessary for a particular volume of production, may affect the labor market in any of three ways: the same amount of production can take place with less labor power; greater production can take place with the same labor power; or even greater production can take place with a non-commensurate increase in labor power.

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The first point to be noted is that up to the recent recession the introduction of automation in the United States, Great Britain and Western Europe was taking place in a period of economic expansion. From the beginning of the fifties total production in the United States, Great Britain, the German Federal Republic and in Western Europe generally, has, on the whole, quite considerably increased; and it was this economic expansion which enabled production in the automated industries to increase particularly rapidly.

The chemical industry, in particular, has been greatly affected by the introduction of automation. The production of chemicals lends itself readily to the introduction of automatic processes. In a "Hearing" before a committee of the U.S. Senate from which we have already quoted Otto Pragan, the educational director of the U.S. International Chemical Workers Union, gave extremely interesting information about the development of the chemical industry in the United States up to the time of the recession.

In the years after the Second World War the production of the chemical industry increased tremendously. From 1947 to 1954 the increase was no less than 53 per cent, or an average of 7.5 per cent annually, whereas the average increase in industry was 25 per cent, or an annual increase of only 3.5 per cent.

If we take the average of production for the years 1947 to 1949 inclusive at 100, then by 1954 it was 125 for U.S. industrial production as a whole, and 148 for the chemical industry. In the circumstances, therefore, it is not altogether surprising to learn that despite the introduction of automation the number of people employed in the industry actually increased. The total number of employed was 694,000 in 1947 and 791,000 in 1954.

An important point to note here is that although the total number of employees increased the total of so-called "production workers" hardly increased at all. It was 525,555 in 1947, and in 1954 it was very little more than 532,000.

What was true of the chemical industry was also true of a good many other branches of industry in which automation spread rapidly —their production increased considerably, but (in the beginning at least) not only were the workers already employed all retained, but new workers were taken on as well.

So long as there was economic expansion even the automated sectors of industry were in a position to increase the total number they employed, and the optimists could reply to those who feared that the introduction of automation would result in unemployment by pointing out that, in fact, their anxieties had proved unfounded: "the facts" did not bear them out. But in 1957 an economic recession began in the United States. It is not our task here to examine it in any detail, but certain of its aspects must be considered.

The economic recession led to the biggest fall in industrial production suffered at any time in the period after the Second World War. At the same time unemployment increased. As, instead of rising, total

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industrial production was now falling, it was no longer possible for the automated sectors to increase their production at the previous exceptionally high rate. The result was a certain amount of unemployment in these sectors also.

However, it would not be right to regard increased unemployment as the *direct* result of automation. It was rather the direct result of the economic recession which hit the economic system as a whole.

Automation Will Become a Decisive Crisis Factor

The economic recession was brought about by a whole series of factors, and certainly not by the progress of automation.

We have pointed out that automation can embrace industries employing up to 40 per cent of the total number of industrial workers, but that is not the case yet. Today it has not made anything like such progress—not even in the United States, and certainly not in Great Britain and Western Europe. In fact, automation is still in its infancy; and because this is so the factors which brought about the economic recession were largely independent of it. In short, automation, and the second industrial revolution generally, are not yet so far advanced that they could determine whether the economic prosperity of the capitalist world shall continue or grind to a halt.

But this can change, and it probably will change to the extent that the automated industries become more and more important by comparison with industrial production as a whole. In fact, the relative importance of the automated industries by comparison with the rest is already rapidly increasing in the United States as automation spreads. In Great Britain and Western Europe, in general, the process is not yet so far advanced.

It is quite possible that in the future automation will affect more than 40 per cent of all persons engaged in industrial production; it can affect half and more than half. But even before it reaches this point it will have become more and more important for industry as a whole. Once things have gone so far, automation, and the second industrial revolution in general, may become more and more the *central factor* which decides whether the prosperity of the economic system as a whole shall continue or come to an end.

During the first industrial revolution there was no very big body of office workers, and in between the two revolutions technical developments primarily affected the factories and the workers employed in them, and not the white-collared workers in the offices. But today these office workers are being directly and indirectly affected by the second industrial revolution; for the first time technical changes are beginning to affect their status. In the first half of the twentieth century the number of people employed in offices increased far more rapidly than the number of factory workers. This was the case not only in the United States but all the big industrial countries of Europe. In the thirty years from 1920 to 1950 the number of office workers in the

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United States increased by 150 per cent, as compared with an increase of 53 per cent in the number of factory workers.

Modern electronic calculating machines and other machinery intended to save labor have only just started to make their way into offices, but during the next few years they will, in all probability, spread there faster and faster. Electronic machines are already able to perform a great deal of the office work which is being done today, which has in any case become more and more mechanical in recent years. The result will be that many office workers will be made redundant. If the present number are to be retained after the widespread introduction of automation then this could only be on account of a very great increase of office work, and it is very doubtful whether such an increase will take place in the foreseeable future. Thus, while in industry proper the factors tending towards an increase in unemployment as a result of automation can perhaps be compensated, and perhaps more than compensated for, by big increases in production, this is not likely to be the case where office workers are concerned, even if there should be some general increase in office work.

To make the position clear you could say that in industry there were protracted periods of rationalization culminating, once the individual labor processes had been more and more simplified, in automation. The situation in offices, however, was usually very different. The process of rationalization and the introduction of automation were often not widely separated; in fact, they often come more or less together within a relatively short space of time. Automation in the factory, on the other hand, was the culmination of a long period of rationalization. Thus, factory workers experienced two separate technical revolutionary processes, whereas in offices today these two technical revolutions are taking place almost simultaneously and in the best case there is only a short gap between them. For this reason office workers may suffer more from the new technical revolution represented by automation; particularly as they are by no means so well organized as factory workers; in fact, instead of being in powerful unions which could protect their interests they will be exposed to automation as individuals and almost without any means of defense. It may well be, therefore, that unless something is done for them this particular group will be the first victims of automation.

But before this danger of increased unemployment makes itself felt to any extent a different danger may have arisen—even in a period of general economic expansion. This is the danger of labor degradation, and it may arise for both factory and office workers unless prompt and effective counter-measures on a suitable scale are taken.

Previously, machinery was minded partly by unskilled workers and partly by skilled workers. A decisive part of this work is now being done by automatic machinery. Thus, the introduction of this new and revolutionary technique makes previous skills redundant. The workman who sold his skill for a living is now no longer in a position to

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do so; it is no longer required. This is true not merely of the factory in which he is or was employed, but in the particular industry as a whole.

The situation thus created will often be made worse by the fact that just those workers whose skills have become a drug on the market are no longer young. They have often developed their particular skills many years ago and have been practicing them ever since. Through no fault of his own this type of workman—and many an office worker too—finds his skill no longer required. Other skills are required, but he has not learned them and cannot provide them. Thus, he is threatened with social degradation, a lowering of his social status; and this not only for a short period, but perhaps for the rest of his life.

Unless society regards it as a primary and urgent task to get these men resettled and re-educated, the situation will be very serious indeed.

Danger of an Increased Concentration of Political Power

In a previous chapter we dealt briefly with the great concentration of economic and political power which came about in the Western world even before the advent of automation, and we saw that the major part of industrial production was controlled by between a thousand and fifteen hundred giant corporations.

Real power is in the hands of a relatively small group of capitalists, managers and employers. In a study entitled *The Structure of American Economy** which was published shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War, there is a chapter entitled "The Corporate Community," which declares:

> ... there is a great deal of interrelationship between corporate managements. Partly through interlocking directorates, partly through the activities of the major financial institutions, partly through particular interest groupings, partly through firms rendering legal, accounting, and similar services to the larger corporations, and partly through intercorporate stockholdings, the managements of most of the larger corporations are loosely brought together in what might be called the corporate community.

Even before the advent of automation, decisive economic and political power in the United States was embodied in this "corporate community," and the situation was similar in the rest of the Western world. However, it must be remembered that not *all* power was in their hands. They wielded the chief influence in their respective countries, but they enjoyed no monopoly of power. They played first fiddle, but they were not in complete control of the orchestra. The trade unions also existed as a power factor, and they had grown stronger and stronger. They played second fiddle, but it was impossible to get on without them.

The second industrial revolution has now come to this society in which the giant corporations on the one hand face the big trade unions on the other. The big corporations are, of course, primarily responsi-

* *The Structure of the American Economy*, a Report under the direction of Gardiner C. Means, U.S. Government Printing Office, June, 1939, Washington, p. 158.

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ble for introducing automation; first of all because they have always been the protagonists of technical progress, and secondly because they have the capital necessary to finance it.

Thus, the giant corporations are the moving spirit in the introduction of automation, and in consequence we are threatened with a development which is only too likely to increase the dangers inherent in any further intensification of the progress of industrial concentration.

Automation, Economic Expansion and World Politics

In the following chapter we shall investigate the world political situation in which the second industrial revolution is taking place, but it is already necessary to point out here that the internal developments in the United States no longer depend exclusively on internal factors; world-political factors are also involved, and, in particular, the rate of industrial development in the Soviet Union.

But man's mind cannot always easily keep pace with events, and it is by no means a matter of course for most people that henceforth world political rivalry will extend more and more to the economic and industrial sphere.

The United States cannot afford an industrial development as slow as the one which has been proceeding so far. Allen W. Dulles has said:*

> Whereas Soviet gross national product was about 33 per cent that of the United States in 1950, by 1956 it had increased to about 40 per cent; and by 1962 it may be about 50 per cent of our own. This means that the Soviet economy has been growing *and is expected to continue to grow through 1962 at a rate roughly twice that of the economy of the United States.* Annual growth overall has been running at between 6 and 7 per cent, annual growth of industry being between 10 and 12 per cent. [Author's italics]

The decisive fact is that in the period of U.S. economic expansion before the arrival of the economic recession, Soviet economic growth was approximately twice as fast as that of the United States. It is therefore by no means enough for the U.S. to overcome the recession and return to an expanding economy. The world political and world historical question is whether and to what extent and with what methods U.S. economy can not only overcome the recession but increase its rate of expansion beyond that which was taking place in the period before it.

When discussing this question we must set our faces resolutely against any isolationism or provincialism. Again and again people compare the rate of U.S. expansion in the postwar period with that of earlier periods, and because the comparison is favorable there is a tendency to smug satisfaction. But this just will not do. In the present world historical situation, the basis of comparison can no longer be America's own past—either industrially or militarily. The only valid basis of comparison today is the rate of expansion of a quite different

* The *New York Times*, April 29, 1958. A tremendous amount has been written about the rate of industrial growth in the Soviet Union, but for our purposes the quotation from Allen W. Dulles is sufficient because it very clearly underlines the main point: the comparison with the rate of industrial growth in the United States.

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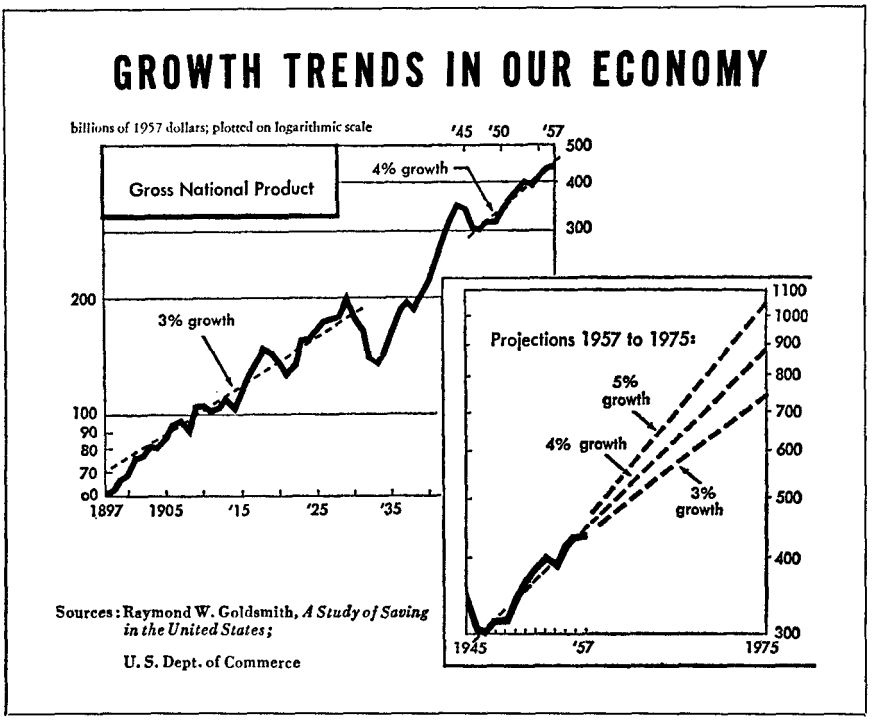
society based on quite different principles, namely, that of the Soviet Union; and it will be still more so in the future as the gap between the total national products of the two countries diminishes.

The Rockefeller Report* presents two very interesting graphs:



The first graph shows a bigger rise in the upward curve in the post-war years prior to the economic recession. The second graph attempts to show the development up to 1975 taking three possible variants: one of 3 per cent; the second of 4 per cent and the third of 5 per cent.

When we consider these graphs alone things look quite comforting. Despite the various crisis oscillations, U.S. economy has, on the whole, steadily expanded. It will continue to expand in the future, and perhaps at an even faster rate. But what these graphs do not tell us is that even if their most favorable variant, i.e., that of a 5 per cent increase, proves to be accurate, the rate of U.S. economic development will, according to Allen W. Dulles, remain well behind that of the Soviet Union. And, of course, they tell us nothing about the all important question, which is: will the United States be able to answer this challenge successfully?

Taking a very high level of production and a high standard of living as their starting point, many U.S. writers have been too ready

* *The Challenge to America: Its Economic and Social Aspects,* Doubleday, New York, 1958, p. 65.

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to analyse coming developments by merely projecting past trends into the future. But in the present period of world political rivalries that just will not do. Quite a different attitude is necessary; in fact, it is a matter of life and death for the United States that the obvious conclusions should be drawn not only militarily but economically, and drawn in good time.

The particularly high rate of expansion in the Soviet Union was made possible by keeping the living standards of between 80 and 90 per cent of the population (the workers and office employees in the town and the peasant workers in the agricultural collectives) very low.

Such depressed living standards made it possible for the Soviet Government to fix investment quotas which were relatively greater than those in the United States; and these unusually high investment quotas created the conditions for doubling Soviet production in a much shorter space of time than U.S. production could possibly have been doubled. In the speech from which we have already quoted Allen W. Dulles gives very striking figures:

> A dollar comparison of the U.S.S.R. and the United States gross national product in 1956 reveals that consumption—or what the Soviet consumer received—was *less than half the total production in the former, whilst in the United States it was over two-thirds of the total.* Investment on the other hand, considered as a proportion of the gross national product in the U.S.S.R. was significantly higher than it was in the United States. Furthermore, investment funds in the U.S.S.R. were plowed back primarily for expansion of electric power, the metallurgical base, and into the producer-goods industries. In these fields it was *over 80 per cent of actual United States investment in 1956,* and in 1958 it will probably exceed our own. [Author's italics]

The figures which are of importance in our connection have been underlined. In 1956 the Soviet Union produced only about 40 per cent by comparison with U.S. production, but the U.S. consumed directly about two-thirds of its production, whereas the proportion consumed in the Soviet Union was less than half. This harsh distribution of the gross national product in the Soviet Union was enforced by the totalitarian State, and made it possible for the Russians to reach 80 per cent of the U.S. investments in "electric power, the metallurgical base and the producer-goods industries," to quote Allen W. Dulles. And this, mark you, was in 1956—a year of U.S. economic expansion. The figures for 1958, a year of economic recession, will probably show that Soviet investments in these same branches of industry were greater than the corresponding investments in the United States. If the gap between the total U.S. product and the total Soviet product continues to diminish, the danger will be that even in years of prosperity the Russians will reach 100 per cent of U.S. investment levels for heavy industry; that they will catch up with the United States not only relatively but absolutely; and that soon afterwards they will forge ahead.

The danger is a very real one, and the sooner it is recognized the better. If things are allowed to go on as they are, the United States, and the Western world which it leads, will be unable to maintain Western industrial and economic supremacy.

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The obvious conclusion is that new methods must be found and adopted. It is, however, equally obvious that the methods with which the Russians have been so successful cannot be taken over. For one thing, the degree of exploitation suffered by working people in town and country in the Soviet Union can be maintained only by totalitarian-terrorist methods, and would be quite impossible with democratic institutions.

The United States, and with her the rest of the Western world, is therefore faced with the task of finding new methods of increasing the productivity of labor to a far greater extent than previously—and this must be done whilst at the same time maintaining democratic institutions. Incidentally it will probably not be necessary to reach the excessively high rate achieved by the Russians, because—as we shall see in our next chapter—they will probably be compelled by the great upheaval which is proceeding within the framework of their own society to increase the proportion of the gross national product devoted to consumption, thereby to some extent decreasing the proportion invested in heavy industry.

Automation can provide the main solution for a great increase of labor productivity in the United States and the rest of the Western world. When automatic processes were first introduced after the Second World War and gained ground rapidly, fears were expressed that automation had come too soon, that it would embrace certain branches of industry too quickly, and that the negative consequences and dangers we have already indicated would inevitably arise.

But it must be pointed out that there is now just as big a danger, namely, that automation will spread too slowly, and that in consequence the rate of economic expansion in the United States will remain too low and it will therefore prove impossible to secure an adequate increase in labor productivity. There is a danger that in the best case the maximum variant foreshadowed in the Rockefeller Report will be attained.

The task, therefore, and a very big and difficult one it is, is so to increase the speed of automation that a much greater increase in labor productivity is secured. At the same time a new relationship between the State and the national economy must be established, and all steps must be taken to ensure that the introduction of automatic processes will be a blessing for the present generation and not merely for those generations still to come.

But if all that can be done is to maintain the present rate in the increase of labor productivity then before the century is out the United States will have been overhauled industrially by the Soviet Union—with all the political consequences which this would involve. The abandonment of democratic institutions cannot even be considered, and therefore automation must be so extended as to raise labor productivity far above its present level.

Aussming that a 6 per cent rate of increase were possible, it would then be necessary to discover how great the growth rate of industrial

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production as a whole would have to be, and, within that whole, the growth rate of the automated industries.

But it is not sufficient to analyze past trends and then project them into the future. It is not enough to say that if the gross national product increases by so and so much then such and such will happen. It was not good enough during the Second World War, and it is certainly not good enough in the present post-war period.

During the Second World War the imperative and urgent task facing the U.S. Government was to overtake the war production of the Axis Powers as quickly as possible. It was therefore given powers to control and guide production, and so to apportion the growing national product that this objective could be reached in the shortest possible space of time. In other words, the government did not content itself with drawing up theoretical statistics of what might happen if .... Instead it drew up its plans, rolled up its sleeves and made certain of what it wanted.

Today the U.S. Government has power to carry through its military program, i.e., to take a certain amount of the gross national product and apply it to military purposes. So far so good; but that is no longer enough. The government must now be given power to plan for the national economy as a whole—at least in broad outline. In the present world political situation it is not enough to say that if there is such and such an increase in the gross national product then the various sectors of the economy could develop in this or that fashion. The present situation is so urgent that the U.S. Government should say forthrightly that an annual average increase of the gross national income of—I should say—at least 6 per cent is necessary for the next ten years if the United States is to maintain its military and industrial position towards the Soviet Union. And within the framework of this general increase there should be a very much bigger increase in industrial production as a whole, and a particularly rapid increase in the automated industries and those about to be automated.

With this the U.S. Government's power should be extended beyond the sphere of purely military production and it would set up certain broad targets for the national economy as a whole and for the automated industries in particular. These targets would be designed to meet the demands of the present world-political situation, and at the same time assure the right proportions between the individual branches of U.S. economy.

In discussing the military revolution we pointed out that it was by no means at an end; it is also quite in the cards that some future historian will record that by the end of the fifties the United States, which is far ahead of the rest of the Western world in automation, had taken only the first steps down a very long path of development in this respect, and that so far there had been only a very slow and inadequate increase in labor productivity for the economic system as a whole. But it is hoped that he will then go on to record that in view of the general world political situation the government acted vigorously, and

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that, after all, a very considerable increase of labor productivity was achieved.

In other words, if the tasks facing us are to be performed satisfactorily, automation during the sixties must proceed at a much faster speed than it did in the fifties, whilst economic expansion as a whole must go forward much more rapidly.

Increased automation in the sixties, together with many other factors, will greatly widen the scope of State activities. The government as such will also have to scope with the dangers which we sketched previously. At the same time it could release those tremendous progressive elements which are connected with the second industrial revolution.

A Last Poem from Bertolt Brecht

It has often been rumoured that Bertolt Brecht, the great German Communist poet, had been severely critical of the East German regime despite his show of Stalinist orthodoxy.

The German magazine *Neue Deutsche Hefte* (No. 52) now publishes an article by Wolfgang Paul in which a number of previously unpublished remarks and verses of Brecht are quoted. These include a poem written in 1953 about the East Berlin uprisings:

The Solution

After the uprising of June 17
The Secretary of the Writers' Association
Had leaflets distributed on Stalinallee
On which one could read that the people
Had lost the confidence of the government
And could regain it only
By redoubled work and effort. Would it not
Be simpler if the government were to dissolve
The people and elect another?

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30 YEARS OF SOVIET INDUSTRIALIZATION

Gregory Grossman

Slightly more than thirty years ago, in October 1928, the first Five-Year Plan was launched. For three decades the resources of a vast country, the energies of a large and talented population, and the capacity of a most elaborate and centralized organization, have been mobilized as no country has been mobilized before, for the attainment of supremacy in the twin fields of industrial power and military might. The avowed goal—to "catch up with and overtake America" in per capita output—is now being daily proclaimed to be within easy reach; but even in the early years of the plan era, when it was only dimly seen, the eyes of the leaders were already fixed upon it.

Clear though the objective has been, it is not easy to measure the distance traversed by the Soviet economy in the three decades. There are, first, the façade of propaganda and the curtain of secrecy to contend with. Although incomparably more statistical information has been published in the last few years than in the preceding twenty (but still less than before that), the data are far from satisfactory for purposes of careful analysis. Important gaps in information remain; much of the data are difficult to interpret for lack of explanation of their derivation; and many statistics are of questionable reliability or are even known seriously to distort what they purport to reflect. The last refers particularly to summary measures of economic growth.[1]

A second difficulty arises from the character of Soviet economic growth, namely, its great unevenness. In some areas progress has been exceedingly rapid, in others there has been very little growth or none at all, and in some respects there has even been retrogression. The economically efficient and inefficient, the technically advanced and backward, are constantly found side by side, often under the same roof. While to a certain extent this unevenness of development was unintended, generally it is the result of consciously adopted and pursued priorities; in any case it makes a balanced appraisal more difficult.

Thirdly, and closely linked, is the "index number problem," which makes its appearance whenever we ask—as we inevitably do—such comprehensive questions as: How much has total industrial production increased? Was there any improvement in levels of consumption, and if so, to what extent? How rapidly has the national income grown? The

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NOTE: This article is reprinted from the Oct.-Dec. 1958 issue of the English journal *Soviet Survey* and revised by the author. The postscript was written for DISSENT.

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answers to such questions depend on the relative importance, *i.e.* the "weights" assigned to the individual components while aggregating (combining) them. Since there is usually a number of possible weighting systems, each with a logic and rationale of its own, as well as a number of mathematical formulae to employ, different answers to the same question may be obtained depending on the method. And the more uneven the growth among the individual components, the greater the likelihood that the answers will differ significantly.

IN TERMS of total industrial production the Soviet Union has moved up from fifth place in 1928 (after the U.S.A., Germany, Britain, and France, and before Italy) to second place today, although on a *per capita* basis it ranks—now as then—considerably lower than on an over-all basis. In 1928, Soviet industry produced approximately one tenth as much as American industry. Lately, taking the America recession year together with the preceding peak, the ratio has been perhaps 40–50 per cent. However, the ratio varies greatly from branch to branch: for example, with regard to machinery and munitions it is doubtless considerably higher. Today, as contrasted with three decades ago, the Soviet Union produces about the same range of industrial articles (though in different proportions) as do the more advanced western countries, and in many instances the levels of technology are also similar. Labor productivity in Soviet industry, on a man-hour basis, is substantially less than half the American level, but probably compares quite favorably with the levels in the major countries of Western Europe.

But what has been the "tempo" of Soviet industrial growth? Western economists have analyzed the official Soviet index of industrial production, and have generally concluded that because of various faults in its construction it greatly overstates the actual growth of Soviet industrial output.[2] For this reason several attempts at constructing a more reliable index of Soviet industrial production have been made in the West, based on the available information on the output of commodities in physical terms. One such recomputation, quite comprehensive in coverage and extending through 1956, was recently undertaken by D. B. Shimkin and his associates, and although methodolgically this index differs from the official one, it is nonetheless interesting to examine the two side by side.[3] [See table on next page.]

Thus according to Shimkin's estimate there was a 7.7-fold increase in total industrial production between 1928 and 1956,[5] or only one-third as much as the official claim. The well-known policy of "primacy of heavy industry" stands out in sharp relief in our table. In terms of Shimkin's index, the output of producers and military goods increased 14-fold from 1928 to 1956; of manufactured consumers goods—3.4-fold; however, since 1950 the two components have been growing at an equal pace.

To calculate the average annual rate of Soviet industrial growth we cannot simply consider the growth to have taken place over the 28

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Soviet Industrial Production,[4] 1928 = 100						
1937	1940	1948	1950	1955	1956	1957 (as % of 1956)
Total						
			Official index			
446	646	761	1,119	2,069	2,290	110
			Shimkin's Index			
274	294	294	434	715	773	
Producers and military goods						
			Official index			
652	1,000	1,299	2,049	3,895	4,339	111
			Shimkin's Index			
426	452	536	781	1,290	1,400	
Consumers goods						
			Official index			
311	415	409	510	899	984	108+
			Shimkin's Index			
171	183	128	197	323	344	

years that separate from 1956 to 1928. First, we must eliminate the eight years (1941–1948) that elapsed until the pre-war (1940) level of industrial production was re-attained. Secondly, although *recovery* in this sense was achieved by 1948, reconstruction of damaged capacity continued on a substantial scale at least until the end of 1950, and indeed (as can be computed from our table) industrial output rose during 1949 and 1950 at about twice the annual rate that obtained in the more "normal" years. Surely the expansion of industrial production while reconstruction is still proceeding cannot be equated with "normal" growth, and therefore we count these two years as four. This gives us altogether 22 "effective years" of growth of industrial production, and the average annual rates implicit in Shimkin's series therefore are: 9.7 per cent for total industrial output, 12.7 per cent for producers and military goods, and 5.8 per cent for consumers goods.[6]

IT WOULD BE wrong to think of Soviet industrialization under the Plans as a smooth and steady process. The heroic period—heroic in the scale of its feats, sacrifices, and errors—was surely the years 1929 through 1936, when the rate of growth of industrial output averaged 12 or more per cent per annum (and well over this during the last four years of the period). It was in those years that the basic institutional framework of the Soviet economy was established, and the basic loca-

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tional pattern laid. The next four years, 1937 through 1940, stand in sharp contrast. Years of the Great Purge and of intensified preparations for war, they show an average rate of growth (annexations apart) of probably only a few per cent a year, although the exact record is obscured by territorial change. During the last five years covered by Shimkin's index, 1952 through 1956, industrial output seems to have increased at an average rate of just about nine per cent per year. Some slowing down apparently took place in 1957, and, as we shall presently see, the Soviet planners apparently expect considerable retardation over the next ten to fifteen years.

If the long period of rate of industrial growth implicit in Shimkin's index—9.7 per cent per year over 22 "effective" years—is approximately correct, then the tempo of Soviet industrial expansion has certainly been extremely high, though not entirely without precedent or parallel among non-communist countries. Over even somewhat longer periods, South Africa (1911–1940) averaged 9 or more per cent, and Japan (1910–1937)—8.5 per cent per year. Over shorter spans of time, Sweden equalled, and (significantly) Russia herself approached, the long-term Soviet rate in the late eighties and in the nineties of the last century.[7] Political and institutional differences for the moment apart, the uniqueness of the Soviet industrialization record therefore lies not so much in the rate of growth, or even the length of the period over which it has been so far sustained, as in that it occurred simultaneously with a huge peacetime military program, and benefited relatively little from capital inflow from abroad (taking the period as a whole).

This observation also applies to the total national product, whose growth had also been very rapid (over the long period); obviously not nearly as rapid as that of industry. While sectors closely linked with the industrialization program, such as transportation and construction, have more or less kept pace with industrial expansion, and the military sector of course grew rapidly too, agriculture and the various activities directly serving the consumer (housing, retail trade, and even education and medical care) expanded much more slowly. Agriculture, in par ticular, lagged badly; even with the considerable upswing that occurred after Stalin's death, it is very doubtful that agricultural production, and especially food production (for there was a shift to industrial crops), is much above the level of three decades ago in relation to the country's population.

Rapid urbanization in a peasant country, involving as it does a radical change in the mode of life, warps our statistical yardsticks and renders any over-all judgment on trends in *per capita* consumption very difficult. (The share of the urban in the total population was 18 per cent in 1928 and is approaching 45 per cent now.) Urban consumption levels, taken separately, are probably moderately better than in 1928, though this is due not so much (if at all) to higher real wages as to the reduction in the number of dependents per wage earner. However, the composition of urban consumption has shifted greatly: housing, clothing, and foodstuffs of high nutritive value are in lower or approx-

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imately equal supply per person, while there has been a marked increase in the availability of the more "modern" manufactured consumers goods. So far as the peasants are concerned, the virtual silence of Soviet statistics with regard to their income, consumption, or even numbers, in itself suggests (to put it mildly) no great advance since the pre-collectivization level.

II

There is no miracle or mystery about the speed of Soviet economic expansion. At the same time, to attribute it—as does the quasi-mystical Kremlin cliché—to the "socialist law of proportional, planned development of the national economy" is to ignore several elements of at least equal importance. It would do even greater violence to reason to assume that any underdeveloped country today can reach the front rank of industrial powers in a generation or so by faithfully following the Soviet formula for industrialization.

In 1928, Russia had a much more favorable heritage than the typical underdeveloped country enjoys today. Although *per capita* income and industrial production were low by European (but certainly not by Asian) standards, and the population was still mostly illiterate and some 80 per cent agricultural, Russia already possessed (as we have noted earlier) the fifth largest industrial complex in the world, including a substantial heavy industry. The relation of population to natural resources—not even excluding the least adequate of these, agricultural resources—was much better than in most countries that stand at the threshold of industrialization today. She had a relatively small but well-qualified supply of scientific and technical skill, and—within its limits—a brilliant tradition in these fields. (The Academy of Sciences was already over 200 years old.) The railway system, which for over half a century had been in the van of economic development, was small in relation to the country's vast territory, but large enough to serve as a basis for much further industrial growth. And, finally, Russia had had a centuries-long history of centralism, authoritarianism, elitism, and economic leadership by the state—which the new régime was quick to adopt, adapt, perfect, and pervert.

The three chief ingredients of the Soviet industrialization formula have been the technology of the West, the country's natural resources, and the underemployed manpower of the village. There is of course nothing distinctly Soviet about them—these are the obvious ingredients of industrialization in any backward, overpopulated agrarian society—although the lavish scale on which all three have been drawn is worthy of note. Rather, the Soviet experience is distinguished by (1) close centralized controls over the physical "surplus" of agriculture and over the "reserve army" of the rural underemployed, both implemented primarily through the collective farm system; (2) a readiness to depress consumption sharply and to keep it low until a large investment and defense potential has been created; (3) channeling the human and ma-

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terial resources so mobilized into the rapid expansion of heavy industry, construction, and supporting activities, and into the creation of associated technical skills; (4) once a large investment potential has been created, using a part of it to raise consumption while retaining most of it to expand heavy industry, *i.e. to enlarge the capacity for further growth* (to the extent that these resources are not diverted to military use); (5) political coercion and terror to maintain the collective farm system and low consumption levels; (6) constant over-commitment of resources, oriented toward a severe system of priorities and a succession of "campaigns"; (7) assignment of physical targets to producers, from the lowly worker up to the minister, and inducing the fulfilment of the targets by administrative pressure, propaganda, and especially by means of an elaborate system of material incentives; (8) continuous pressure from above in the face of resistance from below, for such "progressive" measures as cost reduction, rise in labor productivity, and the introduction of new techniques and products.

The "socialist law of development" pales before the authoritarian principles of its implementation.

CERTAIN DEMOGRAPHIC aspects of Soviet industrialization that have received inadequate notice should not be overlooked. Considering the territorial annexations which added over 20 million people, and the high rate of natural increase in "normal" years, the total population has increased relatively little in the past three decades; from about 152 million in mid-1928 to some 206 million in mid-1958, or by 36 per cent. The explanation of course lies with the two great demographic disasters: one associated with the collectivization crisis of the early thirties, and the other with the War and the hard years immediately thereafter. Superimposed on both was the human toll of the forced labor camps. The population loss—in the sense of the difference between the number that would have obtained at the end of the period had the "normal" yearly increment of about three million held good, and the number actually on hand—may be placed at over 10 million in the former case and over 40 million in the latter. (Not all of these were deaths, of course; a large part were, so to say, non-births.)

The human tragedy of these events, and the economic damage involved in the loss of life can be left to the imagination. But it would be incorrect to assume that there was no short-run benefit to rapid industrialization in these demographic catastrophes. In fact there was such benefit on two scores: in the reduction of the surplus agrarian population, and in a shift in the age structure of the total population.

It is not unreasonable to assume that nearly the whole impact of the population deficit caused by the two disasters fell on the village. The town population could not have grown much more than it actually did (from 28 million on the eve of the First Plan to 70 million by the end of 1950), at least without diverting large additional capital resources from pre-war industrialization or post-war reconstruction to

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town-building. It would be too much to contend that the presence of an additional 10 million persons in agriculture in the thirties, or of (say) an additional 40–50 million after the War, many of working age, would not have had a positive effect on agricultural output; especially since it was primarily young adult males who were leaving the village for economic, military or educational purposes. But one wonders—remembering the shortage of draft power and other non-labor limitations to agricultural production at the time—whether the presence of these additional millions of consumers in the village would not have claimed more of the country's resources than their contribution as producers would have added. More concretely, with 50 (or 40, or 30) million more people in the village after the War, could the rate of extraction of agricultural "surplus" have been as high as it was? If not: Could recovery in urban living standards from the post-war low in 1946 have been as fast as it was? Could there have been as large an urban population, and hence as rapid reconstruction and further economic growth, as there was in the late forties and the fifties?[8]

The deficit of births during the War is also largely responsible for the higher ratio of the population of working age to the total population, and a correspondingly lower dependency ratio,[9] in the post-war years just elapsed.

Remembering that a low dependency ratio means not only fewer children to feed, clothe, and educate, but also more mothers released for work outside the home, we may well ask whether as large a proportion of resources could have been devoted to reconstruction and further growth as has been since the War, had the number of children been more nearly "normal?" Or alternatively and also plausibly, whether average consumption levels would not now be substantially lower than they actually are?

III

The unborn children and the drastic excision of a large part of the agrarian overpopulation under tragic circumstances were a loan extended by time to the Soviet industrialization drive. The loan is falling due. The children of the forties have begun to enter the labor force, and until the mid-sixties it will expand very little. Agriculture, charged with new urgent tasks, no longer can release millions of men; at least not quickly and cheaply, although over the longer run and with sufficient material investment it may still do so. Organizational reforms, such as the transfer of tractors and other machinery from the machine-tractor stations to the collective farms, may help, and even more radical institutional reforms may help more. "Underemployed" elsewhere, in administration, in the forced labor camps, even in the armed forces (we are told), are being transferred to more productive work.

History is recalling other loans at the same time. Urban housing, which (aside from heavy war destruction) has been severely overcrowded

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and badly undermaintained for nearly thirty years, is now claiming a larger share of resources.[10] Similarly, the transportation network—so far essentially the pre-revolutionary rail net—is due for large-scale re-equipment, modernization, and extension to sustain further industrial growth.

Such are some of the major retarding factors; serious as they are, the outlook is not one-sided. The Soviet economy still has quite a bit of slack to take up and quite a few technological gaps to bridge, not to mention the new frontiers that technology is unfolding and will continue to unfold. The recently announced program to expand greatly the production of plastics and synthetics is a case in point, as it is also an important attempt to by-pass the inadequacies of the agricultural base (*e.g.* fibers). Automation is the subject of an intense campaign and great expectations for overcoming the labor shortage rest on it. Soviet theoretical and experimental work in this field is proceeding apace, although the widespread adoption of automation faces some characteristly Soviet obstacles, such as managerial conservatism, irregularity and undependability of materials supply, poor maintenance of equipment, and insufficient standardization of components. And lastly, the rapidly growing supply of Soviet scientific and technical man-power is certainly another favorable factor, and a well-known one.

Interesting questions can be raised about the longer-run effects of the reorganization of industrial management introduced by Khrushchev in mid-1957, which created over a hundred regional authorities, in the place of a score of ministries each in charge of an industry. The expectation that the reform will tend to promote regional autarchy has already been fully borne out. No less significant from a dynamic point of view is the fact that the reform has affected the communication pattern within branches of industry. While before such growth-inducing and growth-promoting organizations as research, development, and design institutes in a given industry were under the same ministry as the corresponding producing enterprises. now the former as well as the latter are administratively dispersed, with indications that the collaboration necessary for technical advance may at times suffer. Secondly, the ministerial channels through which pressure for cost reduction, new techniques, etc. (our point (8) above) in each industry was transmitted to and exerted upon the enterprises no longer exist. It remains to be seen whether the new administrative set-up, in which regional problems take precedence over those of any particular branch of production, can fully replace the old one in this respect.

But in any assessment of growth prospects the largest unknown of all is the diversion of resources to military use, which during the fifties has probably been approximately of the same order of magnitude as *net* investment (*i.e.* net addition to the capital plant). It is clear that their substantial re-channeling to benefit investment could considerably, and favorably, influence the rate of economic growth. This fact cannot be emphasized too strongly.

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But what of the Soviets' own long-range plans? A Seven-Year Plan, covering the years 1959–1965, is currently being prepared to supersede the truncated Sixth Five-Year Plan (1956–1960). At the same time an even longer-range program, or series of programs, is being worked out, the core of which is apparently the set of output targets for 1972 for eleven major industrial commodities that was disclosed by Khrushchev during the 40th anniversary celebration last year.[11] By meeting these targets, he claimed, Soviet industry would attain the 1957 American level of industrial output. He expected, to be sure, that American output would probably rise over the next fifteen years, but a few more years of Soviet growth would take care of that too.

The targets themselves, as well as Khrushchev's reference to the American level, strongly suggest that it is intended to increase over-all Soviet industrial production two or two-and-a-half-fold over the fifteen years. Leaving aside for the moment the matter of "catching up with America," the most striking thing about these targets is the considerable decline in the annual rate of industrial growth that they imply: namely, 4.7 to 6.3 per cent per year, as compared with something like nine for the recent years.

Whether the long-range targets will be in fact achieved remains to be seen. Fifteen-year plans have a way of going down the drain of history. Yet it is clear that the rate of growth, though considerably reduced, is planned to remain high—higher than the American postwar rate of about four per cent per year, although no higher than what many a non-Communist country has achieved in recent years. The announced targets show no retreat from the policy of primacy of heavy industry. The output of manufactured consumers goods, the more problematic among Khrushchev's goals in any case, is to grow more slowly than that of producers goods. Considering the difficulties in agriculture (still far from overcome despite the official optimism), and the likely population growth, it is difficult to see more than a small annual improvement in *per capita* consumption in the next decade-and-a-half. Lastly, Khrushchev's targets give no indication of an expected sharp curtailment of military outlay. (In fact, uncertainty with regard to military requirements may be a chief reason for the targets being stated in the form of broad ranges.)

Much is made by the Kremlin of catching up with America in total industrial production. Such a simply-stated and prestige-laden objective is certainly not without its benefits as a convenient measure to the planner, a spur at home, and a valuable propaganda slogan abroad. Yet for all its significance to national pride and propaganda, industrial parity is a false objective. The statistician knows that even in scrupulous statistical hands the concept of parity of output is entirely relative to the method employed in computing it, and that at any rate such over-all comparisons are fiction, for they abstract from significant diversity and disparity. In less than scrupulous hands fiction may simply be fable.

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To the statesman the concept of parity of output is perhaps even less important. National power does not rest on index points but on concrete capabilities, and in this sense parity has already been established between the two sides in at least two significant respects: in the threat to destroy the other side through military action, and (within practicable limits) in the capacity to render large-scale assistance to the underdeveloped countries. From here on the will and the skill with which policy is pursued are likely to be more decisive than the exact size of the industrial base. In other significant respects, *e.g.* living standards, parity is still far out of sight.

This is not a counsel of indifference. Of course the West must remain militarily strong and watchful. Beyond that, of course, and for many reasons, it should expand its economies at a good rate, avoid economic instability, and redress inequities. Of course it must do more to educate and train its citizens. Of course its countries must draw closer together. The Soviet challenge imparts urgency to what otherwise would be merely wisdom. So much the better.

February 20, 1958.

The above article was written in July, 1958. Since then, in mid-November, the draft of the "Control Figures" of the Seven-Year Plan (SYP) and the "Theses" for a reform in education were published. A month later Khrushchev delivered his important report on achievements and prospects in Soviet agriculture. In the last days of 1958 the Central Committee of the Party and the Supreme Soviet met and at the end of January, 1959, the XXI Congress of the Party convened. The three political bodies rubber-stamped Khrushchev's economic program directed at "solving the basic economic task of the USSR," i.e., "catching up with and overtaking America in terms of output per capita" and thereby (though it does not necessarily follow) giving the Soviet people "the highest material standard of living in the world." As is now generally known, this is to be achieved by 1970, if not sooner. I shall not however dwell here on the realism, or lack of it, of these forecasts, or on the political and propaganda value of their pronouncement.

The earlier impression that the Sixth Five-Year Plan was too ambitious for the resources on hand, and that this was the reason for its scrapping, has now been confirmed. The SYP reduces by 5 to 8 per cent the annual volume of investment as compared with the Sixth FYP (allowing for the intervening growth of the economy), and stretches out over six or seven years the relative increases in output that the FYP envisaged over five. The last is well summed up by such crucial indicators as total energy production and total transportation activity both of which are now to increase in the same proportions over the seven years as over the five years of the Sixth FYP; and by steel and electric power, the output of which is to increase proportionately only moderately more in the SYP than in the FYP.

As was expected, therefore, the SYP does exhibit some retardation in the rate of industrial growth. Because of the peculiarities of Soviet indexes, the projected rate 8.6 per cent per year cannot be taken literally, and by more

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acceptable measuring techniques would probably be one or two percentage points less than that. But even so it is to be as high as or higher than the upper limit of the range (6.3 per cent per year) that my article mentions as being implicit in Khrushchev's fifteen year targets.

It is thus likely that between the end of 1957 and the end of 1958 a decision was taken to step up the rate of Soviet industrial growth in relation to the earlier prognosis. Khrushchev is impatient for his economic victory over America, it seems. The enhanced pressure manifests itself in many ways: first of all in the added emphasis on producers goods, especially metals, oil and gas, and chemicals; in the resolution of the long-smoldering debate over criteria of the choice between alternative technologies in favor of the rationalists and against the dogmatists; in the cutting back of the expensive, though prestige-laden, hydroelectric projects; in the relatively modest shift of industry's center of gravity to the east, where production is often cheaper but takes more time and capital to start; in the reform of education; in additional incentives for women (who are over half the labor force) to continue at work; and perhaps also in the absence of any mention of credit in the Soviet-Chinese economic agreement signed earlier this month. On the other hand there is no indication that military preparedness was sacrificed for the sake of economic growth any more in the drafting of the SYP than in the drafting of the Sixth FYP three years earlier.

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1 The reader will find further discussion of the problems raised by the recently published Soviet statistical handbook in Naum Jasny's *The Soviet 1956 Statistical Handbook: A Commentary* (Michigan University Press, 1957), and in Alec Nove's article in *Soviet Studies* (Glasgow), January 1957.

2 Soviet economists themselves admit the upward bias of the official index, at least when they are engaged in serious discussion among themselves and not in defending the official position; cf. the proceedings of a conference published by the Institute of Economics, Academy of Sciences of the USSR, as *Voprosy metodologii izucheniia i izmereniia proizvoditelnosti truda* (Moscow, 1956), *passim*.

3 D. B. Shimkin and F. A. Leedy, "Soviet Industrial Growth," *Automotive Industries*, 1 January, 1958, p. 51. Shimkin's index is weighted (following Hodgman's pioneering work) by 1934 values-added. The official index on the other hand is a "gross" one, *i.e.* it aggregates the values of output (at supposedly constant prices) of individual enterprises.

4 Soviet definition of industry, which includes mining, power generation, logging, and fishing. Territorial coverage corresponds to the boundaries of the respective years.

5 All such estimates of course are less than perfect. Shimkin's results however agree quite well, allowing for differences in method and coverage, with the results of other recomputations.

6 Strictly speaking, a small downward adjustment in these rates should also be made to take account of the annexation of industrial capacity at the beginning and at the end of the Second World War. We omit it for the sake of simplicity and statistical "conservatism."

7 For the underlying statistics see League of Nations, *Industrialization and Foreign Trade* (Geneva, 1945), pp. 130ff.; Alexander Gerschenkron, "The Rate of Industrial Growth in Russia Since 1885," *Jour. of Econ. History*, Supplement VII, 1947, pp. 146 and 156; and Wm. W. Lockwood, *The Economic Development of Japan* (Princeton, 1954), p. 117. The Russian rate during 1890–1900 was over eight per cent per year.

8 It follows from the argument in this paragraph that the two demographic disasters explain a substantial part of the sharp rise in the statistical urbanization ratio. If both the total and the rural population of the USSR were now, say, 50 million larger

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than they are, the urban population would comprise not about 45 per cent of the total as it does, but about 35 per cent.

[9] From Shimkin's estimates (*loc. cit.*, Table IV, p. 59) of the size of the working-age population—which he defines as males 15–59, and females 15–54—the following percentages of working-age population in the total population and dependency ratios (persons in the other age groups per persons of working age) can be computed: 1926—55, 0.82; 1937—56, 0.785; 1950—60, 0.67; 1955—62.5, 0.6. For lack of precise data on age distribution for all years except 1926, these figures can be only approximate, but the trend is not in doubt.

[10] The slogan is to eliminate the housing shortage in 10 to 12 years (*Pravda*, 2 August, 1957), whatever this may mean.

[11] *Pravda*, 7 November, 1957. Khrushchev spoke of a date "some fifteen years hence," which seems to denote 1972, although it is possible that he and his planners have 1975—the likely final year of a Plan—in mind. The targets were given in the form of ranges rather than single figures. They are, with the corresponding 1957 output in parentheses (in million metric tons, except as specified): iron ore—250–300 (84); pig iron—75–85 (37); steel—100–120 (51); coal—650–750 (463); petroleum—350–400 (98); natural gas, thousand million m^3—270–320 (20); cement—90–110 (29); electric power, thousand million kw-hrs—800–900 (209.5); (so-called) woollen cloth, million meters—550–650 (282); (so-called) leather footwear, million pairs—600–700 (315); and sugar—9–10 (4.5).

Scrambling Eggs to Make Omelettes Dept.

A former sales chief for a juke box maker testified today that he had used underworld connections to push his product in big cities.

Milton Hammergren said he had sold 550 boxes to Chicago gangsters in what was probably the biggest juke box order ever placed . . .

The witness conceded that violence was part of the business.

"We didn't like it, but we had to sell juke boxes," he testified. Asked whether that included killing, he replied:

"That's one of the liabilities of the business, I'd say."

—*New York Times*, February 10, 1959

Coming . . . in the next and future issues:

Several articles announced for this issue, like Ben Seligman's "Socialism Without Marx," and George Woodcock's interesting study of Alexander Herzen, just had to be left out for lack of space. We assure our readers they will soon appear. In addition, we have ready for the next issue: "Meaning in Work—a New Direction," by Daniel Bell; "Conservatism and the Medieval Mind," by David Spitz; "They Laugh That Win," by J. L. McPherson; the articles mentioned elsewhere in this issue by Walzer, Bazelon and Rosenberg. And, of course, letters—among them those we couldn't fit into this issue; and much, much else.

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AMERICAN NOTEBOOK

Some Brief Comments On the Domestic Scene

To Hell With Culture

Hilton Kramer

Despite all the claims and complaints to the contrary, it now looks as if the 1950's will go down as one of the most barren decades in American criticism. For nearly ten years the intellectual energy and artistic commitment of our critics have been diminishing. While the sheer quantity of criticism has been prodigious, there has been a fundamental decline in seriousness. The last book of any real, intellectual urgency was Lionel Trilling's *The Liberal Imagination,* published in 1950 but essentially a document of the forties—the most brilliant document we have of the cultivated liberal mind recoiling from its radical inclinations in the face of the Cold War. Trilling himself could not improve on it; in the fifties he has only succeeded in polishing his style, widening his influence, and refining his distaste for avant-garde literature in the European sense (for that, too, was considered a form of radicalism). Our criticism at large has degenerated into a helpless confession of boredom with the present condition of literature, or, what is worse, an undisguised effort to exploit the postures of criticism in the interests of middlebrow careerism.

Criticism has thus conformed to the general literary decline of the period. It shares with most of the serious fiction and poetry of the decade a diminished sense of the power of art, and a sense of politics so relaxed as to be indistinguishable from lassitude. Frightened perhaps by the demands which celebrated generations of avant-garde writers allowed art to make on their lives, the writers of the fifties have domesticated their sense of literary mission to a neat, manageable size. It makes few demands on them, and with a tactful reciprocity, they in turn make very few demands on art. As for politics, they have sociology instead—a literary sociology which invites no social action and which is second only to psychoanalysis in providing moral alibis.

Without conviction in the power of art or the reality of politics, criticism has given itself over to "culture." The concept of "culture" has now become the last refuge of the liberal mind. A lively "cultural" approach to literature is now the favored practice among those bright younger critics who have seen at a glance that the mileage has run out on the close reading of texts. And unlike the explica-

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tion of texts, the "cultural" approach has obvious advantages—namely, a career in middle-brow journalism. The distance between Trilling's Columbia seminars and the pages of *Harper's* is now a straight line.

But what is this "culture" which is so fondly invoked, so handsomely worried over, and in the end so utterly supported by the liberal critics? Fending its way among political shibboleths, psychoanalytic cant, and works of literature and sub-literature; shopping for objects of interests—up-to-date, but not too demanding—like a housewife putting together a smart menu out of the deep freeze, this new "cultural" criticism addresses itself to a "culture" which is oddly without content, a "culture" which looks more and more like a projection of the criticism which is ostensibly written to clarify it. As a mode of criticism, it is an ideological strategem which enables the critic to maintain his status as a highbrow long after he has mortgaged everything but his rhetoric to the functions of middlebrow expediency.

IN THE CONTEXT of this critical swindle, Richard Chase's new book, *The Democratic Vista,** takes on a special importance. Mr. Chase is part of the Columbia community from which this "cultural approach" originates, and he has lately shown an engaging willingness to reconsider the radical option on which his colleagues have turned their backs with such finality. He stands to the left, as it were, of Trilling (but then, who doesn't?). In relation to the conservatism of recent Columbia alumni, he is practically an *agent provocateur*. Yet, he shares the academic ethos, the reticence and parochialism, the political hesitations and artistic compromise, which characterize his colleagues. *The Democratic Vista* shows us what happens to this narrow liberal sensibility when it suddenly reawakens to its radical past. The result is a book of great interest, but a book which confirms what has often been alleged: that liberal doctrine as it is now constituted is incapable of addressing itself to fundamental questions. Without an interest in political theory, and indifferent to rigorous intellectual and artistic values, it has abandoned itself entirely to the hum and buzz of so-called "culture." With this self-inflicted noise in its ears, it approaches questions which can only be significantly phrased—not to say, answered!—within the intellectual disciplines which it has dropped along the way.

In discussing *The Democratic Vista,* one must first confront its peculiar form. Now I do not count it a virtue in a work of this order that its form imposes at once an obstacle and a query. Mr. Chase has chosen to cast his book in the form of a dialogue. No doubt this is an honorable form, but one questions the validity of reshaping published magazine articles, in which the writer was presumably speaking in his own voice, into dialogues in which the same remarks are assigned to differing points of view. In any case, Mr. Chase fails in the two tasks which might have justified his use of the form: he has been unable to bring to it a distinguished literary style, and he has suffered a loss of incisiveness in transforming his magazine pieces into something more pretentious. The chief consequence of the

* *The Democratic Vista: A Dialogue on Life and Letters in Contemporary America,* by Richard Chase. Doubleday Anchor Books, New York. $3.95.

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dialogue form in *The Democratic Vista* is the blurring of issues. It serves only too well in getting its author off the hook whenever he is called upon to do some hard work at the theoretical level.

FOR HIS DIALOGUE, Mr. Chase brings together six speakers on a September week end at the Massachusetts seashore. They talk about "current psychological, moral, political, sexual, literary, and other matters," and the talk —most of it between the middle-aged professor, Ralph Headstrong, and the graduate student, George Middleby— is pretty much what you would expect a Columbia professor and graduate student to be talking about during a week end in the country: Walt Whitman and Henry James, William Dean Howells and Henry Adams, the early Van Wyck Brooks and Edmund Wilson, D. H. Lawrence's *Studies in Classic American Literature* and de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America,* and the rest of the books which used to be on Trilling's reading list for his graduate course in American literature. Thus, the "Letters" of the book's sub-title refers not to the creative literature of our own period but to what the college catalogues call "American Studies." (Just as the "Life" of the sub-title refers to life on a college campus and the suburban environs.)

This may seem like very narrow ground from which to issue an invitation to cultural radicalism, the ostensible purpose of this book. Two quotations from Mr. Chase will perhaps give his justification for it; in both cases it is Professor Headstrong who is speaking:

> I start with the proposition that in our time there is a general drive, in all segments of our culture, toward some sort of middle ground of taste and opinion, a general desire for passivity and rest and conformity, a fear of the turmoil of the mind, a longing to escape conflict, a longing to assuage all the vivid contradictions and anomalies that in the past have engaged the American mind. The leading image of the day is a sort of mystic centrality, an equability of mind. This middle view of things find a sanction at its best in the tragic sense of life and in the inherited common sense of the race. At its worst, it finds a sanction in mere complacency, laziness of mind, fear of extreme ideas and feelings. Its most noticeable manifestation is the smothering orthodoxy and conformism of the Eisenhower Age. The search for a middle way of culture is in certain radically significant ways a denial and abandonment of the cultural ideals of the American mind of the past, as this mind is mirrored in our most characteristic historical figures and in our most characteristic and original literature.
>
> Among the most perceptible observers of American life the most influential are those who (1) tell us that our culture has always been marked by striking differences, even outright contradictions, of taste and low culture, and (2) view this split with alarm and advocate a middle ground in which contradictions and differences may be reconciled. . . . I agree only with the diagnosis. For as it seems to me, it is the duty of the intellectual these days to oppose, or at least to question, the ideal of a middle culture, as our best writers and thinkers have always done . . .

This is really the core of Mr. Chase's book. The rest is a garrulous exchange about what "our best writers and thinkers have always done" and some facile references to the life of the mind as it struggles amidst the impedimenta of modern domestic duties. It is thus heavy on professorial irony

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and rather light on intellectual subtleties. The fact is that Mr. Chase never moves his discussion beyond the points which I have quoted above. His mind moves backwards in literary history; it is completely at home with the celebrated figures of American literature and it has many original points to make about them, but it always keeps a safe distance from the present.

One of the consequences of this distance is that while Mr. Chase is firm in his attack on middlebrow culture, he is curiously vague about the content of highbrow culture. There is much talk in his book about radicalism and the avant-garde, but there is only silence on their *relation*. The assumption is that they are somehow congenial in their historical objectives if not precisely identical in their contemporary interests. Now this may by no means be the case. However one may write the history of the avant-garde in the last hundred years, it cannot be made to conform to the history of radicalism in the same period. Occasionally they touch, more often they clash. Their relation is ambiguous, sometimes accidental, occasionally programmatic, but it can scarcely be assumed that their interests are identical. Their precise relation—and its modifications from country to country, and from decade to decade—is indeed one of the richest questions in modern intellectual history, and a magnificent book could be written on the subject.

Mr. Chase's silence on this question is astonishing when one considers that it has a special importance for American intellectuals. Its primacy derives above all from the fact that an uneasy and often contradictory alliance of radical political interests and avant-garde artistic taste formed the prevailing intellectual style in this country during the decade and a half preceding the advent of the Cold War, which finally shattered it. It was precisely this alliance of interests which gave Edmund Wilson his distinction as a critic, and it was the source of *Partisan Review*'s authority during the forties when it still wielded power in the sphere of ideas. It was this alliance which Trilling successfully challenged in *The Liberal Imagination*. By the late forties it had become an accepted and unexamined idea, no longer in touch with the creative and political realities of its time, and it could offer no defense against the first incisive blow to its prestige.

Mr. Chase leaves this idea in its unexamined state. His book is thus the first I know to be written out of an implicit nostalgia, not for the thirties —don't let that talk of radicalism fool you—but for the forties! It longs for a time, not of explicit political and artistic tasks but for a period when these tasks were conveniently confused with each other.

I think we have to ask why Mr. Chase has been at no pains to make distinctions between the radical and avant-garde imperatives, and I am afraid the answer is that *from the point of view of middlebrowism there are no differences*. This is only one instance—I think the crucial one—in which Mr. Chase reveals himself to be writing about this question from within the middlebrow camp itself.*

* Another evidence of this middlebrow bias is Mr. Chase's farcical suggestion that Chaucer and Montaigne are middlebrows whereas the gloomy Pascal is a highbrow. Notwithstanding all his ironies and qualifications on this score, it is a judgment which could not be improved on by Van Wyck Brooks himself, early or late.

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In particular, I find his discussion of the avant-garde quite as irrelevant to the living literary situation of the 1950's as the remarks of Brooks which he properly disputes. Only once does he touch on recent literature—and then it is literature of the forties, not the fifties—and this passing reference (which I shall return to presently) reveals the fundamental confusion of his thinking on the subject.

THE FACT IS that Mr. Chase is without a coherent idea of the meaning of avant-garde, and yet the avant-garde is central to his program (if that is the word) for a cultural radicalism. He has taken no trouble to make this term, already so fashionable and abused, more precise in its historical and critical meaning. At various times he applies it to Wordsworth and Coleridge, to the Russian novelists of the nineteenth century, and to the modernist poets of Europe and America. I doubt if we can use this term to cover so many diverse groups and still have it retain any precise historical meaning. I think it adds nothing to our understanding of the Russian novelists, for example, to confuse their status as part of the Russian intelligentsia with the notion of the avant-garde. Russian literature did not have an avant-garde in the Western European sense until the Symbolist movement of the nineties. Mr. Chase gives one the impression that for him the avant-garde is synonymous with any kind of literary excellence during the last century and a half. But then, as if this weren't imprecise enough, he also wants to give it a political slant. Thus, Professor Headstrong declares: "In its critical function it [i.e., the avant-garde] is wherever anyone is trying to give a true account of the history and nature of our civilization . . . . Like most people nowadays, you think the avant-garde is dead. I can only reply that under modern conditions the avant-garde is a permanent movement."

Now this statement comes very close to being nonsense. By speaking of the "critical function" of the avant-garde, Mr. Chase manages straightaway to beg the question, which is (need one add?) its *creative* function. Moreover, it is at least arguable that under "modern" conditions—I would say since the thirties, but certainly since 1945—it has no longer been possible for an avant-garde to exist. Everything in our economy and in the social organization of the arts conspires against the privacy and independence which would be indispensible if the spirit of the avant-garde were to survive. Once we find ourselves in a situation, as we do today, in which society has assigned vast bureaucracies to the task of seeking out and exploiting the last word in all the arts, and when the artists themselves have joined as eager accomplices in this orgy of self-exploitation —in this situation, I think it is mere piety to deny that the avant-garde is dead. The fact of the matter is that since 1945 bourgeois society has tightened its grip on all the arts by allowing them a freer rein. Guilt-ridden by its failure to do justice to the artists of the past, it has reached out to new generations of writers and artists with an embrace which has now become a stranglehold. I hasten to add that we are by no means without writers and artists of great distinction and accomplishment, but it is self-defeating to speak of them as members of an avant-garde. We lack a new term to describe their collective character and social function, partly be-

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cause of our unwillingness to admit that the avant-garde is a thing of the past and partly because the new phenomenon is itself so baffling when approached by way of historical categories which apply only to this celebrated past.

Only once does Mr. Chase suggest a claim for recent literary accomplishment; this is the paragraph in its entirety:

> The literary academicism of the 1940's was on the whole a fairly tame movement, although I cannot refrain from expressing my feeling that that period has been much maligned. The unintimidated critic is still wanting who will prove brave enough to defend a decade which saw the emergence of writers like Saul Bellow, Randall Jarrell, Robert Lowell, Ralph Ellison, Alfred Kazin, Isaac Rosenfeld, Mary McCarthy, and Leslie Fiedler among many others—a decade which, furthermore, if it was too academic, nevertheless came to understand American culture and its "usable past" much more accurately than they were ever understood before.

Such a critic would be brave indeed, but let us hope that he would begin by making some distinction (as Mr. Chase conspicuously fails to do) between creative artists like Bellow, Lowell, Ellison, and the writings of literary critics and journalists. Mr. Chase's refusal to distinguish between creative achievements and the writings of literary journalists is another demonstration of the literary decline of the fifties.* It is apposite to his inability to define the avant-garde in any meaningful way, for the fundamental difference between the work of art and a discourse on literary subjects seems lost on him. This means that Mr. Chase arrives in the end at exactly the same impasse as his Columbia colleagues: like them, he can only address himself to a void which he is pleased to call "culture." We finish *The Democratic Vista* with no firmer sense of political possibility nor of artistic values, for both are drowned in the "cultural" bath. Unlike his Columbia colleagues, Mr. Chase wants to sweeten this bath with the scent of radicalism, but it is merely a vapor. He leaves his notion of cultural radicalism—like so many other things in his book—conveniently undeveloped. One is unclear about what specific tasks it would perform; as Mr. Chase outlines it, it is less a task than an emotion, a vague ache of the heart which one feels but does not act upon in any precise way.

What emerges from *The Democratic Vista* is not an incisive declaration of the radical role, but something else, something infinitely more depressing. In this dialogue we have a true picture of the sophisticated literary professors of the the fifties, with their soiled diapers and damp ironies, groping in the sacred canons of the past for some clue to the meaning of the present, yet utterly unprepared to face the present in its bewildering reality. For their defense against the present they have the magnificent edifice of their "cultural" hallucinations—an unreal universe in which art, politics, and the rumpled suburban bed all shimmer with "meanings" of equal importance and equal inconsequence. In this universe, "radicalism" and "avant-garde" are dreams from which one never quite awakens and in which one never quite believes. They are dreams which relieve one from the necessity of dealing with the new experience—the new art, and the new politics—of our period. The spirit of Mr. Chase's

* See also "The Article as Art" by Norman Podhoretz, *Harper's Magazine*, July, 1958.

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book is very like the house in which his dialogue is set: "The spirit of the place is no longer avant-garde—I mean, what I like about it is that it has all the comforts of home and some of the restful atmosphere of a museum." We've read quite a few books of this description lately, but this is the first which comes in the name of a radical criticism.

The Deserted Village

Maurice Stein

This important book* provides detailed information about a form of community that few people still experience at first hand—the rural village. Those of us who live in cities are thus given an opportunity to check our conceptions of rural life against the report of two skilled observers who lived in an upstate New York village for several years. Their finding that small town life is completely dominated by influences from metropolitan centers might have been anticipated, but the circumstances surrounding this "rural surrender" deserve careful attention.

As Bensman and Vidich report in impressive detail, small town residents seem quite unaware of their dependence on cities. Their images of small town life, like those held by city people, are akin to and drawn from nostalgic movies and Norman Rockwell magazine covers. Indeed, the people of "Springdale" depend far more heavily on these prefabricated images for their conception of their own community than they do on the evidence provided by their everyday experience.

Springdale, the town studied by Vidich and Bensman, is as close to an authentic farm village as one is likely to find in present-day America. The total population of the township is 3,000, of whom 1,000 or so live in a village and the remainder on outlying farms. These farms are for the most part independent holdings, since the growth of large scale farms, which Carey McWilliams once aptly called "factories in the field," has not taken place in this part of upstate New York. If the myth of the small town were to hold true anywhere in America, Springdale, with its tiny population, its independent farmers and its relative isolation from large cities, would seem a likely choice.

On the level of conscious opinion, most of the townspeople consider Springdale an ideal small town. They talk about its "neighborliness' and are especially proud of the "rugged independence" and "grass roots democracy" which they feel to be characteristic of local political life. This favorable self conception is juxtaposed by them against an image of the big city as a place where political corruption and impersonality reign supreme. Once the validity of these contrasting images is

* *Small Town in Mass Society*, by Arthur Vidich and Joseph Bensman, Princeton University Press, 1958. $6.00.

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granted, then the choice of Springdale as a place to live is not only sensible but downright inevitable.

But when our two sociological observers disregarded what people told them the town was like and concentrated on what they saw in front of their eyes, an entirely different picture unfolded. Beneath the claims of "neighborliness" and "equality," they found a set of clearly differentiated socio-economic classes having different life styles and life chances. These "friendly neighbors" render judgments of personal worth in terms of impersonal economic success exactly as do their urban counterparts. The cultural life of the community is dominated by patterns imported from the city and few traces of an indigenous "small town" culture are to be found. The much vaunted "grass roots democracy" proves to consist of endless political ceremonies conducted by elected officials who have no real power. Important local decisions are made by a political machine consisting of four top leaders who work behind the scenes to control the affairs of the town. And this "invisible government" is itself subservient to state and national authorities on all matters of significance.

SPRINGDALE is organized so that responsibility for managing the political surrender to mass society lies in the hands of the top leaders who hold no formal public offices. The economic surrender is arranged individually by the members of the various occupational groups as they go about their daily affairs. Farmers depend upon urban markets and sources of supply as much as local businessmen and professionals. Yet everyone ignores this dependence just as they ignored the diffusion of urban living standards and life styles. If attention were called to these facts, the people concerned would deny their significance and vigorously reaffirm the idealized image of the "independent small town." The handful of local citizens who dare question the small town myth in public, expose themselves to heavy penalties.

This disparity between ideology and reality which strikes the outside observer so powerfully is systematically ignored by the people involved. Their personal identities are found upon a commitment to an idealized small town way of life. It is this commitment which justifies their choice of Springdale as a place to live in. It gives their lives meaning and dignity of a sort even though the price paid is a steep one; they are forced to relinquish their capacity for "realistic" social thought. For most people living in Springdale, facing reality would threaten the basis of their self-esteem.

The existence of this "invisible government" and the impotence of the formal political structure could constitute a threat to personal and social stability if the local citizenry were ever to realize that these make a mockery of their assumptions about "grass roots democracy." Such recognition is prevented by the habit of "particularization"—a concept used by Vidich and Bensman to characterize the ways in which Springdalers perceive social processes and events. It involves habitually segregating perceptions of particular events and processes so that generalizations about them cannot be drawn. Springdalers are able to accept any number of specific facts attesting to the existence of the political machine, class differentials or the towns dependence on mass society, yet they refuse to recognize that this evidence

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can lead to any important conclusions. Idealized conceptions are never exposed to realistic tests because the capacity for generalized thought upon which such confrontation depends has been sacrificed to the need for preserving the image of rural independence.

EVEN THIS would probably not be enough to inhibit awareness of the "obvious" social realities were it not reinforced by a round of life which leaves little opportunity for reflection. In Springdale, report Bensman and Vidich, anyone who shows signs of thinking too deeply about himself or his community is quickly labeled "abnormal" (in Russia they call it "cosmopolitan") and efforts are made to bring him back into line with the normal state of mindlessness. Introspection is headed off by the feverishly active life that small towners lead. Everybody is expected to work hard at his job, his family life, his leisure, his church membership and his political responsibilities. Only the disreputable "shack people," the lumpens of the countryside, escape this constant pressure towards organized activity and they do so only by taking the extreme step of abandoning the local versions of the American Deam—they accept "failure."

This book leaves the reader with a disquieting suspicion that he too may be clinging to illusions about his own community. It always is easier and more fun to poke holes in our neighbor's mythology—but what about our own? Studies of various suburbs suggest that the myth of the "happy" suburb is as dubious as the myth of the small town. And our own myths —the myths of the socialist community —have received their share of critical attention from friend and foe alike.

Yet we at least have one advantage. It lies in the fact that a search for critical insight into the relations between social myths and social realities is an integral part of the radical tradition. By scrutinizing the sources and effects of false consciousness in rural American life, Vidich and Bensman not only call into question one of the most cherished popular illusions about American society, they also help to preserve, with great skill and sophistication, the tradition of radical criticism.

Dissent Student Conference

On May 2–3 the George Orwell Forum of Yale University will sponsor a conference of New England students interested in the views of DISSENT. The list of speakers is not yet definite, as we go to press, but the Orwell Forum announces that Michael Walzer, a DISSENT editor, has agreed to speak on "The Campus Scene" and B. J. Widick, a UAW Shop Steward and co-author of *The UAW and Walter Reuther,* will speak on "Labor and the Intellectuals." It is also hoped and expected that the program will be rounded out with Lewis Coser discussing aspects of mass society and Seymour Melman, the editor of *Inspection for Disarmament,* speaking on the armaments race.

Students from the entire New England area (or adjacent colleges) are invited.

Registration fee: $3. Saturday night party; Sunday, hike and cookout.

Housing: limited housing available for Saturday night. Please write in advance to Bob Bone, 267 Willow Street, New Haven, Connecticut.

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The following article comes from a Hungarian socialist now living in Paris, who is known in America for his recent book on the 1957 revolution in Hungary. Mr. Fejto's manuscript came to us a good many months ago, and it may indeed be somewhat of an injustice to him that we have been forced, for reasons of space, to delay it until now. Nonetheless, it is clear that his argument is neither to be sustained nor disproved by reference to one or another temporary fluctuation of the politics of eastern Europe; and that the problem he raises remains a basic one, requiring extended discussion. It is in this spirit that we now, tardily, publish his article. Comments from readers are invited, and it goes without saying that Mr. Fejto will have the opportunity to reply to his critics.—EDITORS

CHANGES IN THE COMMUNIST WORLD

Francois Fejto

The new political thinking of Milovan Djilas, as set forth in *The New Class,* is marked by a rather surprising contradiction. On the one hand he prophesies the "complete disintegration" of Communism and states that the unity of the "world communist movement is irremediably compromised"; on the other hand he asserts that the changes which have occurred since the death of Stalin have altered not at all "the nature of the system," that national communism, despite increasing possibilities for emancipation from Moscow, is incapable of changing its "essence." (This essence resides "in the control and monopoly of ideas, and the expropriation of the society by the bureaucracy of the party.")

It seems to us, however, that the process of de-Stalinization has opened the very heart of world communism to changes that can be retarded but not prevented.

After the death of Stalin, centrifugal forces manifested themselves with a burst. The Cominform disappeared, following the 20th congress of the USSR Party, even as a symbol of the Kremlin's hegemony over the international Communist movement. A groping pluricentrism has succeeded the Stalinist monocentrism. It is certain that decisions concerning China or Poland and even Czechoslovakia are no longer made unilaterally in the Kremlin. The Russians no longer dictate; they consult, they negotiate.

But at the same time, in reaction to the strong pressure of the secessionism and the urge to freedom that was seen at work in Hungary, another tendency comes into play: a tendency to patch up the ideological unity, to reforge the solidarity of the Communist parties

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and countries. Since 1954, when Mao Tse-tung conceived the idea of transforming "the empire" into a sort of "commonwealth," the idea has made progress. It reflects certain objective and complex needs. It expresses, in the first place, the solidarity and the interdependence of the various bureaucracies of the Communist parties; the noise of the Hungarian insurrection made windows tremble as far as Hradsin, the White House of Belgrade, and the residence of Mao. The fear of popular revolt has reforged the alliance of the party leaderships.

On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that most of the countries in the Soviet bloc, including China, depend on the protection of the USSR against certain external pressures, which call into question their territorial status quo. Gomulka has thus been able to claim (and one could not contradict it) that Polish adherence to the treaty of Warsaw is based at once on an ideological community and on the national interest (the Oder-Neisse frontier).

ONE MUST ALSO BEWARE of approaching in an "idealist" manner the "essence" or "nature" of Communism. This essence, according to Djilas, lies in the totalitarianism of the "new class." The privileged of the new regime, he says, must become totalitarian or die—and this, apart from whether communism is "national" or not. It seems to me however that the *Rude Pravo* of Prague has been much closer to reality in asserting some months ago, that national communism is one of the forms of "revisionism" and is necessarily interdependent with other kinds. In fact the "national communist" (as has become clear in Yugoslavia, Hungary and Poland) is distinguished from his predecessor, the Muscovite Communist in that, deprived or almost deprived, of the direct support of the Soviet army, he must win a popular base in his own country. The "national communist" can be deceitful in regard to democratization, he can postpone it, he can apply it in a formalist manner; or, as the Yugoslavs have done with such virtuosity, he can create substitutes for it. But he must submit to the law of democratization. Despite all the nostalgia with which he regards totalitarianism, he must resign himself to some compromise with the people whom he wishes to make an ally.

And how, moreover, can the essence of Communism be unchangeable, while the Communist is not? The best argument against these pessimsitic views of Djilas is the case of Djilas himself. Was he not the most despotic, the most brutal, the most intolerant of all the Yugoslav Stalinists? For many years the intellectuals of Belgrade trembled before this implacable inquisitor. And did not Dedijer, the friend of Djilas, tell us, in illustration of his former Stalinism, that he would have been capable of shooting any compatriot who doubted Stalin's genius?

The fanaticism of the Yugoslav Communists seemed to us until 1948 an impregnable citadel, a spiritual malady impenetrable to reason or good sense. But if this was so, how explain the evolution of Pijade, Djilas, de Lasota, Kolakowski, Imre Nagy, Tibor Dery? How

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explain the blossoming, in the midst of incurable sickness, of the seeds of health, of a humanistic critique, of a passion for reform?

And is it not interesting to notice that even though Djilas, no doubt because of his defiance and anger, was drawn to a harsh anti-Communist position somewhat like Souvarine, other impassioned but lucid anti-Communists, like Raymond Aron, fundamentally revised their theories? Did not Aron write, in a remarkable introduction to a book of documents on the Hungarian revolution: "We know that a Soviet regime is no more invulnerable than any other to the repercussions of economic development, to the emotions and dreams of men, to the influences coming from outside and above all from the West. Furthermore this regime is affected by an internal fracture which the oriental despotism of the past did not experience: it is condemned by the ideology which it claims for itself."

This is precisely what distinguishes Stalinist totalitarianism from other totalitarianisms, for example the Nazi. Indeed, Djilas also grants that before establishing themselves in a "new class, oppressive, exploitative and dogmatic," prior to having transformed Marxism-Leninism into a myth of justification, most Communists felt the power of a revolutionary morality. The moral revolt of many Communists, Polish, Hungarian, Yugoslav and Russian would be incomprehensible unless it be considered a crisis of "the return of the repressed," provoked by the shock of the Khrushchev confessions. It has often been remarked that an air of bad conscience accompanied the acts and gestures of Stalinism, its exactions, its treacheries, its trials. But in order to have a *bad* conscience, one must first possess a conscience. Buried deep in the Communist soul, there is still the socialist idea, a demand for rationalization of social life, of respect for man, of economic efficiency. One can maneuver this ideal, twist it or confiscate it, as Khrushchev has actually tried to do; but it is a factor with which one must reckon.

WITHOUT DOUBT DJILAS' BOOK would have gained in profundity if he had attempted a "psychoanalysis" of the object of his hatred and repulsion: the reigning bureaucracy. In writing his own moral and intellectual autobiography, he would have contributed more to our knowledge of the Communist than by his abstractions.

Edgar Morin, in the French journal *Arguments,* has already called attention to the danger represented by a simplified treatment of the term "bureaucracy" which the anti-Stalinist left often uses without analyzing the phenomenon in its genesis, complexity, heterogeneity. Djilas himself employs the term sometimes in a restrictive sense (bureaucracy of the party), sometimes in a broader sense: "the new class is composed of those who enjoy special privileges and a preferential economic situation based solely on the administrative monopoly which they hold." But this definition seems too imprecise.

Within most Communist countries, the oligarchy of the party substituted itself (in the offices as in the private apartments) for the

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dispossessed bourgeois and landowners. In order to justify their political monopoly and their privileges, the party oligarchs claimed for themselves the mission of developing more rapidly than the bourgeois would have been able to do, the productive powers of the nation. But in order to carry out this action, the party apparatus—within which the professional revolutionaries, recruited from the heart of the proletariat, play an important role—had in the first instance to associate itself with the intelligentsia, that is to say the middle class: managers and specialists of all sorts, engineers, technical staffs, scientists, doctors, jurists, teachers, writers, journalists. The party apparatus was grafted moreover upon a state bureaucracy inherited from the old regime which it was able only partially to renovate. In terms of privileges, the various strata of the party bureaucracy were intermingled to a certain extent with those of the "productive" or administrative intelligentsia. An incompetent but politically powerful manager shares advantages with the technical director, the superior officer with the political commissar. But precisely the tensions between commissars and specialists, both their tendency to merge and their quarrels, constitute one of the basic webs of life in Communist countries.

And it is precisely the bitter period of struggle conducted by the productive intelligentsia against the parasitic bureaucracy which marks the real evolution in Communist countries. The party apparatus, accused of incompetence and inefficiency, attempts to regain the confidence of the "specialists," makes important concessions to them, is forced to permit entry of greater numbers of the intelligentsia into the party, to merge itself with it.

At the same time, under the influence of a kind of collective instinct toward conservatism, the patry apparatus maintains its distance with relation to the intelligentsia, denounces it before the working class, and demagogically reproaches its "bourgeois tendencies." This peculiar "bonapartism" is manifested somewhat similarly in the party: its tendency to play the classes one against the other in order to make the party the supreme arbiter. Thus the party that accelerates, by its own nature, bureaucratization, periodically launches "campaigns for debureaucratization."

ANOTHER WEAPON employed by the party bureaucracy to justify its privileges "apart," is its participation in the "gnose," in the Marxist-Leninist *Weltanschauung* made into a metaphysics which, precisely because it sums up all knowledge, transcends any knowledge. It is by the grace of Marxism-Leninism that the bureaucracy of the party claims to dominate the specialists, to judge and coordinate their activities. It is by the grace of this Science of "General Laws" that a Zhdanov has greater knowledge of esthetics than Pasternak or Prokofiev, of physics than Einstein, that Stalin was able to improvise himself into a great linguist, a great strategist, a great historian; and that, more recently, Khrushchev was able to chastise the rebellious writers.

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This is the social predicament of the "apparatchik" which inevitably secretes dogmatism with its articles of faith—a new "opium of the people." This is why one must take with a grain of salt the anti-dogmatic protestations which the Communists periodically proffer. The anti-sectarian campaign of Khrushchev and Mao Tse-tung was never directed at the bases of dogmatism; it resembled the "fundamentalist" movements which used to agitate Protestantism, in that it tends to prune the Dogmatic, to reduce it to some fundamental truths, such as faith in the directive mission of the party, in the profound identity of the party-proletariat-people, etc. For there is an absolute necessity for the party bureacracy to assure for its political decisions an independent "theoretical" basis, transcending the knowledge of the specialists and hence irrational. Absurdity is one of the forces of cohesion in the party. It is no accident that Rakosi decided against the advice of all the specialists on the construction of the metro in Budapest. If it is true that as Djilas says, the Communist finds himself in a situation of "incipient civil war" against the population, this definition is also valid about relations of the bureaucrcay with the administrators and specialists.

It is in the economic domain that the antagonism between the party and the specialists is most evident. A. Nove reports, in a remarkable study published in the November-December issue of *Soviet Survey* (*An analysis of cultural trends in the Soviet orbit*), that despite the immense practical achievements which culminated in the launching of Sputnik, Soviet economic science has remained completely stagnant during the last quarter of a century. The explanation of this lies in the fact that after the nationalization of Soviet indutsry, the Soviet economy tended quite naturally to settle into State capitalism, directed by an oligarchy of managers. But the party, for reasons of doctrine and in order to affirm its supra-economic power, was never able to admit to having served only as mid-wife to a society which would escape from its tutelage...

And while Khrushchev's decentralization measures are a step toward removing certain of the most anachronistic citadels of superplanning, and toward granting a greater autonomy to the managers, the supreme decision still rests not with the latter but with the regional bureaucracies of the party and the State. It remains true that most of the leaders begin to recognize that the initial plan to control and foresee everything, that supreme ambition of totalitarianism, was absurd, unreasonable, foolish. After having believed, contrary to all good sense, in the supreme virtue of the "directives," and of the political decisions emanating from the Politburo, they have partly returned in Russia as in the other Communist countries, to the classical stimulants of the market economy.

BUT SUCH CONCESSIONS gnaw at the center of the totalitarian system. In all domains, the intelligentsia, this new ascending class, even though not organized, formulate their liberal demands: the writers, the journalists fight the censor; scientists and technicians express their

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scepticism about the simplicity of the obligatory paths of Marxist-Leninism; Russian isolationism is crumbling; the universality of science is more and more widely recognized; competence is emerging as the only solid basis for rising in the hierarchy. Partisan absolutism defends its position and withdraws only step by step; but in the end it withdraws. It is this that Djilas refuses to see: that there exists, as much in his own country as in the Soviet Union, a reformist intelligensia which tries, if possible, to rationalize the regime, of which they are the beneficiaries, without overthrowing it. Even in Hungary the majority of the intelligensia, whose agitation was a source of the revolution of October 1956, were reformist in this sense. Later they were swept aside by the youth and the "ultras." At bottom, the new middle class of Communist countries much resembles the western bourgeoisies of the 19th century. It is liberal, but not anarchist; it fears revolution and prefers transition.

It is this group which thus far has provided motive power for the evolution of Communist society and not the proletariat in the name of which the party reigns. The greatest danger to the monopoly of the Communist parties would be a meeting between "those who think" and the mass of workers who have become the object of history instead of assuming the role of shaping subject that they should have been according to Marxist theory. Let us note however that the eclipse of conscience of the proletariat in Communist countries does not need to continue indefinitely. Slow, prudent, but irreversible the worker's awakening follows that of the intelligensia. Already it has been reported that the Soviet directors themselves, no doubt to prevent spontaneous movements, have restored to the unions certain tasks for the defense of the workers' interests, at least on the factory level...

FROM THE ABOVE we hope it is clear why we agree with the French socialist Daniel Guerin in his amicable criticism of Djilas for having lost sight of the possibilities for specific change in Communist countries. Djilas seems to recognize but one alternative to Stalinism: Western parliamentary democracy. But the most developed members of the intelligentsia of Communist countries, while criticizing their own regime, judge as severely the weaknesses of Western democracy, its lack of vision, its slowness in adapting to the conditions of the atomic age its lack of civism. They seek a third way. Rather than reject Marxism, they wish to revise it. Certainly, theories such as those of the "withering away of the State," or of the "outlawing" of the law of value, like the ideas formulated by Lenin forty years ago about the form that the administration should take in a socialist state, now appear out-of-date and primitive. But all within this heritage is far from being negligible or unsalvageable. In opposition to the irrationality of Stalinism, the intelligentsia of the Communist countries seek new directions in rationality.

Translated by PATRICIA A. KOSOBUD

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A Critical Comment

Henry Pachter

In publishing this article more than one year after it was written, the editors are most uncharitable to the author. But they may be doing a service to those who shared his illusions during the time of the million flowers. It is too obvious that all the tenses in Mr. Fejto's article now are wrong, and a floored fighter does not have to be knocked down again. In retrospect, the friends abroad of the so-called revisionists inside the Soviet empire appear to have been led into a tragic error by personal loyalties and information from one-sided sources. It was only natural that these friends and partisans of the reformist intellectuals in Hungary, Poland, and even in Russia, should have overestimated the importance and the prospects of those for whose victory in inner-Party conflicts they hoped; they had more than an intellectual stake in their cause. And inasmuch as confidence is a prerequisite for success, or even for the conception of a strategy, their error today looks much nobler than the bland pessimism of those who had no policy *vis-à-vis* the turmoil of the Thaw and now can gleefully say, I told you so. The fact that Mr. Fejto was wrong does not make his opponents look any better; nor does the fact that Mr. Djilas is a martyr make his theories any less simplistic than they are. To have been right in this discussion, either way, should be no source of pride.

But neither is there any virtue in clinging to positions which no longer are tenable. The head of Mr. Fejto's school, Isaac Deutscher, recently has published interpretations of current Soviet policies which read not like an analysis of reality, but like an attempt to justify his earlier mistakes. To do so he makes it all a question of personalities. Khrushchev, he now asserts, was a good man inspired by the best of all intentions, but Suslov and other evil spirits unfortunately defeated these intentions; or adverse circumstances made enemies (for Khrushchev) among the economic bureaucracy and elsewhere, which, in combination with sinister visits to Moscow by the exiled Molotov, forced poor Khrushchev to resort to Stalinist methods. Mr. Fejto likewise puts great emphasis on the personal dispositions and intellectual abilities of the leaders—as though it depended on Khrushchev's insight to liberalize the régime, or on the zeal for reform among the intelligentsia to guide the evolution of the totalitarian state into a more democratic socialist commonwealth!

Nevertheless, the intellectual stirrings within the Soviet empire do reflect tensions within the system, and doubts or conflicts among its leadership. As a method of analysis, the personal and subjective

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approach of Deutscher and Fetjo may have certain advantages over the dogmatic theorem that the Soviet system, by definition, cannot change. The problem which the current reaction in the Soviet empire puts to the outside observer is precisely this: why does the system always return from its serious attempts at evolution into the groove of its earlier totalitarian routine? To answer this question, the subtle marshalling of inside dope is not subtle enough. And, unfortunately, Mr. Fejto supplements it with a sledge-hammer theory of Soviet evolution which is no subtler than the sledge-hammer of the defeatist dogmatists. He puts all his hope on the intelligentsia, as though it were a distinct class, and he attributes to it a power which it certainly does not have. Paradoxically, it might even be said that some of the intelligentsia, inasmuch as they are part of the Party apparatus, have more power while others, as "free" practitioners of the liberal arts, have less power than Mr. Fejto attributes to them. Nor do they display the ardor for liberty which the slogan of the Thaw was mistakenly thought to indicate.

It is plainly an error to assert that Soviet journalists "fight the censor" or that Russian isolationism is crumbling. On the other hand, scientists have as little difficulty in accommodating their ideas to dialectical materialism as have their Western colleagues in bowing to the truths of the Bible. Certainly the Party wants "competence" and it opens its ranks to competent men. But, as Mr. Fejto correctly says, these competent men would rather penetrate the bureaucracy than ally themselves with the working classes. They would rather plead for policies which from the Soviet standpoint would be rational, than formulate ideas which conflict with the rationale of the Soviet state. They go along with the frequent changes in Soviet policy and rationalize their motivations. They did so in Stalin's time and they are doing so now.

It is very surprising that Mr. Fejto should have forgotten the rhythm of liberalization and reaction in the forty years of Soviet experience. He speaks of the return to the "classical stimulants of the market economy" as of a new discovery, as though the NEP had never existed. He concludes his article with a reference to the "irrationality of Stalinism" in contrast to the "new directions in rationality," as though the most gruesome characteristic of Stalinism had not been its cruel rationality in terms of the Soviet state. And here Mr. Fejto's method unfortunately turns against him. In dubbing "rational" a Soviet policy which he liked, he did gain a tool to build a policy favoring further liberalization of the system. But this does not leave him any alternative to calling "irrational" the return to Stalinism. He deprives himself of a tool for analyzing the rationality of Khrushchev's policies; he deprives himself too of the possibility of suggesting policies to deal with this adversary.

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COMMUNICATIONS

A REPLY TO CRITICS

Hannah Arendt

Of my two opponents, Mr. Tumin has put himself outside the scope of discussion and discourse through the tone he adopted in his rebuttal. Mr. Spitz's argument, on the contrary, would deserve a point-by-point analysis if it constituted a refutation of my position. Unfortunately, despite his fairness and the consistency of his own position, Mr. Spitz has misunderstood and misconstrued my argument to such an extent that I would have to quote and requote from our articles sentence after sentence, not to answer his rebuttal, but only in order to correct the misunderstandings upon which this rebuttal was based. This would be tedious and space-consuming, and still could not result in anything better than a restatement of my original argument. I therefore prefer to take my cue from the simple fact that my article was not understood in the terms I wrote it, and I shall try to repeat its essential points on a different, less theoretical level.

The point of departure of my reflections was a picture in the newspapers, showing a Negro girl on her way home from a newly integrated school; she was persecuted by a mob of white children, protected by a white friend of her father, and her face bore eloquent witness to the obvious fact that she was not precisely happy. The picture showed the situation in a nutshell because those who appeared in it were directly affected by the Federal Court order, the children themselves. My first question was: what would I do if I were a Negro mother? The answer: under no circumstances would I expose my child to conditions which made it appear as though it wanted to push its way into a group where it was not wanted. Psychologically, the situation of being unwanted (a typically social predicament) is more difficult to bear than outright persecution (a political predicament) because personal pride is involved. By pride, I do not mean anything like being "proud of being a Negro," or a Jew, or a white Anglo-Saxon Protestant, etc., but that untaught and natural feeling of identity with whatever we happen to be by the accident of birth. Pride, which does not compare and knows neither inferiority nor superiority complexes, is indispensable for personal integrity, and it is lost not so much by persecution as by pushing, or rather being pushed into pushing, one's way out of one group and into another. If I were a Negro mother in the South, I would feel that the Supreme Court ruling, unwillingly but unavoidably, has put my child into a more humiliating position than it had been in before.

Moreover, if I were a Negro I would feel that the very attempt to start desegregation in education and in schools had not only, and very unfairly,

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shifted the burden of responsibility from the shoulders of adults to those of children. I would in addition be convinced that there is an implication in the whole enterprise of trying to avoid the real issue. The real issue is equality before the law of the country, and equality is violated by segregation laws, that is, by laws enforcing segregation, not by social customs and the manners of educating children. If it were only a matter of equally good education for my children, an effort to grant them equality of opportunity, why was I not asked to fight for an improvement of schools for Negro children and for the immediate establishment of special classes for those children whose scholastic record now makes them acceptable to white schools? Instead of being called upon to fight a clear-cut battle for my indisputable rights—my right to vote and be protected in it, to marry whom I please and be protected in my marriage (though, of course, not in attempts to become anybody's brother-in-law), or my right to equal opportunity—I would feel I had become involved in an affair of social climbing; and if I chose this way of bettering myself, I certainly would prefer to do it by myself, unaided by any government agencies. To be sure, even pushing and using my elbows might not entirely depend upon my own inclinations. I might be forced into it in order to make a decent living or raise the standard of life for my family. Life can be very unpleasant, but whatever it may force me to do—and it certainly does not force me to buy my way into restricted neighborhoods—I can retain my personal integrity precisely to the extent that I act under compulsion and out of some vital necessity, and not merely for social reasons.

My second question was: what would I do if I were a white mother in the South? Again I would try to prevent my child's being dragged into a political battle in the schoolyard. In addition, I would feel that my consent was necessary for any such drastic changes no matter what my opinion of them happened to be. I would agree that the government has a stake in the education of my child insofar as this child is supposed to grow up into a citizen, but I would deny that the government had any right to tell me in whose company my child received its instruction. The rights of parents to decide such matters for their children until they are grown-ups are challenged only by dictatorships.

If, however, I were strongly convinced that the situation in the South could be materially helped by integrated education, I would try—perhaps with the help of the Quakers or some other body of like-minded citizens—to organize a new school for white and colored children and to run it like a pilot project, as a means to persuade other white parents to change their attitudes. To be sure, there, too, I would use the children in what is essentially a political battle, but at least I would have made sure that the children in school are all there with the consent and the help of their parents; there would be no conflict between home and school, though there might arise a conflict between home and school, on one side, and the street on the other. Let us now assume that in the course of such an enterprise, southern citizens who object to integrated education also organized themselves and even succeeded in persuading the state authorities to prevent the opening and functioning of the school. This

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would be the precise moment when, in my opinion, the federal government should be called upon to intervene. For here we would have again a clear case of segregation enforced by governmental authority.

THIS NOW BRINGS US to my third question. I asked myself: what exactly distinguishes the so-called Southern way of life from the American way of life with respect to the color question? And the answer, of course, is simply that while discrimination and segregation are the rule in the whole country, they are enforced by legislation only in the southern states. Hence, whoever wishes to change the situation in the South can hardly avoid abolishing the marriage laws and intervening to effect free exercise of the franchise. This is by no means an academic question. It is partly a matter of constitutional principle which by definition is beyond majority decisions and practicality; and it also involves, of course, the rights of citizens, as, for instance, the rights of those twenty-five or so Negro boys from Texas who, while in the Army, had married European girls and therefore could not go home because in the eyes of Texas legislation they were guilty of a crime.

The reluctance of American liberals to touch the issue of the marriage laws, their readiness to invoke practicality and shift the ground of the argument by insisting that the Negroes themselves have no interest in this matter, their embarrassment when they are reminded of what the whole world knows to be the most outrageous piece of legislation in the whole western hemisphere, all this recalls to mind the earlier reluctance of the founders of the Republic to follow Jefferson's advice and abolish the crime of slavery. Jefferson, too, yielded for practical reasons, but he, at least, still had enough political sense to say after the fight was lost: "I tremble when I think that God is just." He trembled not for the Negroes, not even for the whites, but for the destiny of the Republic because he knew that one of its vital principles had been violated right at the beginning. Not discrimination and social segregation, in whatever forms, but racial legislation constitutes the perpetuation of the original crime in this country's history.

One last word about education and politics. The idea that one can change the world by educating the children in the spirit of the future has been one of the hallmarks of political utopias since antiquity. The trouble with this idea has always been the same: it can succeed only if the children are really separated from their parents and brought up in state institutions, or are indoctrinated in school so that they will turn against their own parents. This is what happens in tyrannies. If, on the other hand, public authorities are unwilling to draw the consequences of their own vague hopes and premises, the whole educational experiment remains at best without result, while, at worst, it irritates and antagonizes both parents and children who feel that they are deprived of some essential rights. The series of events in the South that followed the Supreme Court ruling, after which this administration committed itself to fight its battle for civil rights on the grounds of education and public schools, impresses one with a sense of futility and needless embitterment as though all parties concerned knew very well that nothing was being achieved under the pretext that something was being done.

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THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE

William Spinrad

May I add a word to the discussion begun in the last DISSENT on the political climate in America?

Essentially, the 1958 vote continued a trend that began after the Korean War in the summer of 1953. The Polish and Hungarian events destroyed the image of the Kremlin's domain as a cohesive totalitarian empire. The Stalinist menace has become more that of a national political and economic rival (the Middle East) and a technological contestant (rockets and space exploration) rather than of an organizer of world-wide subversion. Conspiracy explanations of international affairs have become less feasible and the "politics of revenge" against the Democrats—a basic ingredient of what used to be called "McCarthyism"—less pertinent.

As a consequence, large numbers of those voters who had shifted to the Republicans because they blamed the Democrats for the spread of Stalinism and the resulting Korean War, have now returned to the Democratic column. Voting alignments based on domestic issues again prevail, further accentuated by the recession. (The South is a separate problem.) Last November's returns were similar to those of the 1948 election, even though the campaigns were quite different; they also marked the return to the Democratic fold of wartime shifters. In both cases, the vote indicated that the New Deal type of electoral line-up was endemic to the American political scene, making the Democratic Party the normal majority party, whose victories would be overwhelming whenever domestic, particularly economic, issues were most relevant —the Taft-Hartley Act, civil rights, and the end of price control in 1948, the recession last year.

Despite the landslide Eisenhower victories, the shift in the early 1950's to the Republican voting as such was slight and impermanent. Korean war resentments were neither sufficiently pervasive or lasting to counteract the picture of the Democrats as the champions of the downtrodden. Some former underdogs who no longer feel deprived—junior organization men on the make —probably switched completely to what they consider the party of ultimate respectability. But, they were never assured of their status, and it is likely that the recession restored early memories and early voting ways for many of them.

The New Deal has had another lasting effect. Those who cut their political teeth during the 1930's and early 1940's are the dynamic political leaders and attractive candidates. In contrast, the Republicans can offer only a few archaic rural types and Madison Avenue creations. The Democrats start every campaign with the advantage of more candidates with spontaneous voter appeal.

In the absence of an important change in the international situation, any combination of Republican ineptness on domestic questions and the ability

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of the Democrats to "deliver" a few tangible rewards (improved minimum wages, federal aid to education) will assure Democratic dominance in Northern metropolitan areas and, therefore, in national politics. (There is also the possibility of permanent Democratic inroads on the farm vote.) But few voters are adhering to the label with any political passion. For despite the persistent identifications that stem from the New Deal era, the differences between the Northern Democrats and the Republican "liberals"—even the Eisenhower administration cohorts—is very slight.

On domestic economic issues they differ on some specific legislation—as revealed by the administration's opposition to aid for economically distressed areas. But, in contrast to the situation in the 1930's, the national leadership of both parties has the same basic orientation.

Nor is there a sharp cleavage on civil rights. To quote Mort Sahl's description of the respective Eisenhower and Stevenson positions on school integration, the former is for "moderation," the latter for "gradualism." And the only perceptible difference on foreign policy that is organized along party lines is the assessment of blame for the supposed missile lag. The voters may thus have reestablished the New Deal type of electoral alignment, but without the old-time partisan fervor.

If the electorate is so little excited by the differences between the parties, the politicians are even less moved. The liberal dream of a new "political alignment"—a completely liberalized Democratic Party versus the reactionary Republicans—will be as unrealizable as ever. Politics will go on about as usual. The fight within the Democratic Party will remain a family quarrel, with Northern liberals inspiring the electoral victories, the Southerners in control of the organization of Congress, and legislation the result of ad hoc alliances.

THE ESSENTIAL similarity of the two parties could, as always, provide an impetus for some kind of third party-labor party development. Yet there is less sentiment for such a new party than at any time during the past two decades. The reason is something we might as well learn to accept: the labor movement can best achieve the *type of politics it pursues* within the present party system. It is not asking for too much, and as long as the Democratic Party can maintain its image as the plebian spokesman and can offer a few legislative victories after election, the unions will be reasonably satisfied.

Some place their hopes for a new political climate on labor's independent political organization, which should presumably engender an automatic clash with the patronage-oriented party organizations. This might be true if there were much labor independent political action, even when supporting Democratic candidates. But, apparently all that was actually done in most unions in the 1958 election, as before, was to print articles in the union press, get members registered, supply manpower to Democratic organizations on election day, and help advise and finance individual campaigns.

One is forced to admit that, in terms of labor's current political objectives, this is the most realistic set-up. Creating a more thoroughly "laboristic" Democratic Party or a new labor party would, at least initially, alienate enough lukewarm Democratic voters to assure decisive Republican victories and the resul-

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tant defeat of much desired legislation. Those who advocate independent labor politics should be prepared to accept this immediate result as a small price for ultimate ends. But labor leaders and liberals are "practical," and within their narrow vistas they will be successful enough to feel justified.

What, then, is the perspective for the American radical these days? Must we remain essentially critics, living on the political margins and waiting for the breaks? However reluctantly, we must accept this as our general fate for the coming period. Any other expectation will only yield more frustration.

But this is not meant to be a call for abstention. One can productively participate in many arenas while maintaining a radical political stance—labor unions, liberal groups, civil rights organizations, even in the major parties at the appropriate time and place. It is time we stopped feeling embarrassed by being involved in small scale operations, as long as we do not delude ourselves into believing they are much more.

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THE SOPHIST: A PORTRAIT

Jean-Marie Domenach

PARIS

A soft, round face with a dull and banal expression; a mouth out of which come resounding but hollow words. Haven't I already come across him on some subway platform or in his home town of Arras? No, I must be wrong.

Strictly speaking, this man has no history of his own. He was one of the people, a war orphan, a ward of the nation. . . . His own history is lost in that of his people's sufferings and in his own rise: inspector of secondary schools, English language teacher. Among the socialists he was another militant, with the resistance another resister, with the soldiers, a soldier. He did whatever he had to do. He is the opposite of a symbol; he is Everyman. He represents both an obscure sort of courage and social security, retirement for the aged and the struggle against tyranny. He is the Unknown Soldier of French socialism.

A top soldier too, for—happily—we live in an epoch in which corporals are raised to dictators, adjutants become marshals and trade unionists, governors. A democratic epoch: apotheosis of the banal, triumph of the anonymous—so he is!

Ten times he was given up for lost, but ten times he came back. They covered him with spittle in Algiers, but he emerged, shining and with distinction; the tremendous shock of last May came close to destroying him, but left him, finally, on the very peaks. During his stay in the government, it was he who took the place of the General when de Gaulle left to visit our noble provincial cities and the still nobler cities beyond our shores. He who incarnated that fatal spiritual corruption and the cheap political lie of the Fourth Republic was the hope of the Fifth even before there was a Fifth! Republics pass, Mollet remains.

Shortly before his death Zhdanov confided to Marshal Tito's envoy that, "We have more confidence in Mollet than in Nenni." Mollet was then only the leader of the "Marxist," leftist tendency within the SFIO [French Socialist Party], but he already knew how to inspire that scornful credit which statesmen—usually to their regret—grant politicians whom they judge sufficiently shrewd to deceive their own followers but not quite sharp enough to trick them.

HE CONDUCTED the 1956 election struggle along pacifist lines; he spoke of making the Algerian colonialists disgorge their plunder; of "halting a blind and imbecilic repression." The result was a brief victory of the Republican Front and a government in which Mollet put Mendès-France in second place ("he isn't one of us, but he's the best of them.") Then came February 6th, 1956, when Guy Mollet, surrendering to a howling mob, abandoned

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both Algeria and his government to the will of the army.

In April, 1958 Mollet once more steered a course to the left, even going so far as to give up Robert Lacoste [the draconic Socialist governor of Algeria.] But once more an event stopped him: the *coup d'etat* of May 13 for which he must bear the prime responsibility. This is the moment when he became, simultaneously, three men: as minister in the Pflimlin government he intrigued to bring about its downfall and to have himself placed at the head of a government of national unity; as an apostle of resistance to personal power he furtively negotiated with General de Gaulle. Thus he was a minister in the Pflimlin cabinet, a future Premier in a Guy Mollet government and a future second minister of a de Gaulle government. And all this at one and the same moment! His enemies swore he was lost. For the first time the socialist group pushed him aside and voted, in his absence, in favor of an intransigent declaration. During the debacle the SFIO minority was sure that it had at last decapitated their Secretary-General.

It was wrong. Three months later Mollet dragged a "yes" out of a reluctant Socialist Party congress by covering up this motion with another favoring negotiations over Algeria. It was the minority which was forced to leave. Mollet is still there; still victor!

What is the source of this extraordinary faculty for imposing his personal whims and fancies upon a great party with democratic traditions? And so effectively that, whether he is shifting from the right or left, he always ends up on top. Mollet is omnipotent for the very same reasons which usually led to his being underestimated. Having no doctrine in a party which long ago lost its own, but able to put on display a handful of recollections and a dozen quotations from Alain, Blum and Bracke, he gives an assurance of remaining faithful to that indefinable something which all French socialists cherish in common. Since he himself lacks anything singular in his personality, he does not cause any fright in a party whose intellectually superior members are hated by the rest with all the strength residing in a petty bourgeois soul.

And so he became the leader, totally, inexorably. He took Daniel Mayer in, put him in his pocket and then lifted his political theses from him. The party's last theoretician, Andre Philip, he had expelled. The intellectuals of the *Revue Socialiste* were forced to give way before him. Now he is sure that nobody will attempt to remake party doctrine and so much the worse for his two sons-in-law who have just joined the party and to whom he confessed he had nothing to give them to read. Depreux has gone, Savary . . . 13 deputies along with several sections. But he and his men remain. We are reminded of Stalin's mathematical ascent; there is, in fact, much of Stalinism in this prudent diligence, this destruction of intelligence and systematic purging of the party apparatus.

The base of his support rests upon the powerful federations of the north with their worker militants who hate the Communists for having misled them and often having brutally fought them. Elsewhere, the secretary-general patiently stuffed the party hierarchy with his creatures: here, a mayor is in Mollet's debt because of his silence about some scandalous affair; there, a functionary whose skirt-chasing ac-

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tivities are known to Mollet; the secretary of another federation is a teacher in Arras, happy in his silence; in still another section his foster-sister lays down the law. . . .

STILL AND ALL, such maneuvers would have been ineffective if Guy Mollet did not possess much more than tactical skill. He possesses in addition a sort of ardent cordiality, a ring of sincerity which attaches his listeners to him and causes his enemies to hesitate. I have listened to him. He speaks with that mixture of reason and sensibility characteristic of democratic orators. He most assuredly has an air of pathos about him. When I left the meeting one of the left-wing minority leaders said to me, "Now can you understand why we have so much trouble at our conventions?"

And I understood. As a matter of fact, anyone can understand simply by reading that incredible collection, *Bilan et perspectives socialistes,* which is made up of three or four speeches compiled by him, constituting the sum and substance of our hero. Without once mentioning February 6, 1956, Mollet is capable of expounding his entire policy and concluding by telling us how proud he is of himself! His policy was a victorious one and, indeed, he would have carried us as far as Suez if the Americans hadn't stepped in; a policy so victorious that no one dares ask why it failed.

Mollet's secret is to speak a language attuned to a people who refuse to hear the truth. It is the secret of the Sophist as Socrates revealed it. His speeches feed upon the Beautiful, the Good, the True; outwardly, all is consistent with their essence. We allow ourselves to be seduced; if we do not reflect that between his words and his attitude, his conclusion and the reality, there is no connection, we are lost. Then, if we retrace his argument we discover the lie to be everywhere. These speeches are concerned neither with essence nor reality but only with the lowest form of usefulness. Starting from general postulates of the left (social and economic progress, "independence" of the individual, etc.) Mollet arrives at conclusions held by the right (struggle against any form of nationalization overseas, hatred of all intellectuals, support for Neo-Gaullism etc.). This is how he becomes miraculously a man of the right, carrying out its policy in the name of liberal and generous sentiments.

He is the end product of socialism's debauchery, that degradation of the people ferreted out, perhaps unjustly but prophetically, by Peguy in Jaures. Between Mollet and a large segment of our population—formerly socialists and republicans—there exists a deep understanding. This lends him whatever historic dimension he may have; he senses keenly what these people want. Sickened by lies, betrayed by so many revolutionists and absorbed now in the general rush toward bourgeois prosperity, they want a nice, comfortable, progressive security, retirement without any difficulties, a Bismarckian socialism tinted with a good democratic conscience.

Mollet served to assure a continuity between the Fourth and Fifth Republics. More than the fanatics and the conspirators he should make us shudder. Because he is no phantom come from nowhere who will quickly fade away. His kingdom is solidly planted in the ranks of the left, among the people. Guy Mollet is the creature of our decomposed hopes.

Translated by STANLEY PLASTRIK

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Aid to India—How Much Is Enough?

How much aid is US providing for India?

In 1958 the total of direct US loans was $325 million—nearly half of that sum repayable in badly needed dollars, and all repayable according to a timetable which bears no relation to the probable repayment capacity of any underdeveloped country.

What is the repayment schedule on US loans?

Both US and World Bank loans have been granted for relatively short periods and repayment installments are becoming due and accumulating annually. The 20 loans totalling over $500 million made by the World Bank to India during the past 10 years will be largely repayable during the Third Five Year Plan (1961–66). The 1957 International Monetary Fund Loan of $200 million must be repaid by 1962. The $150 million loan made by the Export-Import Bank in the spring of 1958 also falls due during the Third Plan. The same is true of the two loans from the Development Loan Fund in the amount of $175 million.

What does India need?

The US share in Indian development should not and cannot be less than $3 billion over a seven year period covering the last years of the Second Plan and the full Third Plan. In addition, it must be recognized that in India, and most other under-developed countries, the need for capital goods and technical assistance from abroad during the first years of development is so great that any added loan repayments in foreign exchange create an insupportable burden. The repayment of loans, therefore, should be spread over a 50-year period and should not even begin for at least 25 years.

What are the results of present US policy?

Our fitful efforts to meet periodic exchange crises are demoralizing to Indians and permit no sound basis for planning. With no notion of what to count on from the West, Indian planners must scale down the Third Plan now in preparation; and in so doing they are endangering the present political order.

What can be done?

If our aid is to pay off in stability and growth, we must extend government-to-government aid on the scale outlined above. How the aid is channeled is less important than persuading the agencies concerned to change their policies from short- to long-term loans. This would require a basic policy change, and could probably not be made without Congressional mandate. Merely adding capital to the Development Loan Fund will not make it possible for India to plan soundly. About 50 countries would be competing for the increased funds and any disproportionate allocation would arouse resentment and recrimination. Assistance to India requires special authorization and long-term planning of loans in consultation with Indian experts. [Drawn from an article by Matthew J. Kist in *The New Republic,* December 15, 1958.]

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BOOKS

C. Wright Mills' Program: Two Views

THE CAUSES OF WORLD WAR III, by C. Wright Mills. Simon & Schuster. 1959, 172 pp. $3.50.

I. A. J. Muste

Let me begin by placing on the record my opinion that Mills has written a sound, brilliant and most timely political tract. In using the latter term I do not mean to put it into a minor category but to praise it as being in a great tradition of books which are of high intellectual quality but which also propose a program and sound a call for action. That an American sociologist of Mills' standing who is also an unusually well informed and sophisticated analyst of political events should publish such a book is an event in the world struggle against war. If the book meets with the response from Mills' fellow-intellectuals and from the physical scientists which I think it merits, it may prove a major turning point in that struggle.

Incidentally, one speculates on the implications of the fact that the essential contents of this book were first given a year ago in the national capital as Sidney Hillman Award Lectures. If by any chance this means that there are people in the top echelons of one or more big U.S. trade unions who are dubious about the tie-in of the labor movement with the Eisenhower-Dulles-Truman-Acheson foreign policy and the U.S. war machine and are actually willing to sponsor such startingly unorthodox views as Mills here put forth, this would really be something. It would tempt me in my declining years to exclaim: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace."

It is Mills' thesis, based on his earlier studies, especially *The Power Elite,* that power-decision making is centralized in contemporary society. It is possible to put the finger on the men who do in fact make decisions and therefore presumably determine whether World War III will or will not come.

Secondly, intellectuals in general and the physical scientists in particular have defaulted. They have permitted the current powers which have a "political monopoly" also to have a "monopoly of ideas." And "if truly independent ideas are not even formulated, if we do not set forth alternatives, then we are foolishly trapped by the difficulties those now

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at the top hove got us into." For the most part intellectuals have been helping the power men to fight the cold war by being its "self-coordinated technicians, hired publicists—pompous scientists who have given up the scientific ethos for the ethos of war technology—intellectual dupes of politcal patrioteers."

I suppose there can be argument as to the extent to which intellectuls are themselves caught and whether anything politically useful can be expected from them, but that many have defaulted and that they have some responsibility seems to me indisputable. If the intellectuals and scientists have a rebuttal, let them present it.

However, the most distinctive and potentially important points Mills makes are very specific and deal with the question how the world can be saved from nuclear war and the cold war which is the first stage of World War III.

In the first place, Mills recognizes that sitting "in continuous session with the Soviets till a disarmament agreement is achieved" may not, very likely will not, be enough to break the stalemate. Unilateral action may be required. Thus he proposes that "the U.S. government should at once and unilaterally cease all further production of 'extermination' weapons and take steps to destroy existing stocks or convert them in so far as it is technically possible to peace time uses." Again, "the government should abandon all military bases and installations outside the continental domain of the U.S." At another place he nails down the point asserting that it is less "realistic" to "spend more money on arms than to stop at once—and if need be unilaterally—all preparation for World War III. There is no other realism, no other necessity, no other need. If they do not mean these things, necessity and need and realism are merely the desperate slogans of the morally crippled."

THIS LAST PHRASE suggests that national policy is subject to moral standards or imperatives. Mills' second highly important proposal is his unequivocal call to intellectuals in in general and the scientists specifically to become "conscientious objectors." Thus "this disgraceful cold war is surely a war in which we as intellectuals ought at once to become conscientious objectors. . . . It requires only sanity." To say, as some scientists and others do, that if they do not undertake certain war jobs, others will, "is less an argument than the mannerism of the irresponsible." To refuse such work "is an act affirming yourself as a moral center of responsible decision. . . . It reveals the resolution of one human being to take at least his own fate into his own hands."

These two proposals relating to unilateral action and assumption of personal responsibility spell revolutionary pacifism. Naturally, I concur.

Thirdly, in tackling the question of means for influencing public policy Mills recognizes that a movement or party is needed and does not now exist here. One choice, he goes on, is to acquiesce, which is called "practical politics." The alternative is to retain the ideals, advance them and work for them in such ways as may be available, until, hopefully, organized forces are built up. This is regarded as "utopian" but it is now "the only adequate way to think

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about world politics and the human condition . . . What the powerful call utopia is now in fact the condition for human survival." Again, I concur. One of the crucial questions in the field of political strategy today is whether the attack on war along some such lines as Mills suggests is the soundest and most readily available way to develop radical mass action today.

Finally, I think Mills is correct in charging that an important reason for the bankruptcy of U.S. foreign policy and the dolorous state of society in general is that a good many of the best of our intellectuals allowed "themselves to be trapped by the politics of anti-Stalinism, which has been a main passageway from the political thirties to the intellectual default of the apolitical fifties." That both ecclesiastical and secular leaders of opinion, in rejecting Stalinism, have in effect been apologists for U.S. foreign policy and its war machine or at best ineffective critics of it is a major tragedy. In this context Mills correctly calls attention to the fact that "the first significant cracks in the intellectual cold war came in the Communist world after the death of Stalin"—in Poland, Hungary and Yugoslavia, and that the enemy now is not Russia or the United States, as the case may be, but war. This is the stark, ultimate fact of life now. To see this and proclaim it is not to go soft about Communism or Soviet diplomacy and militarism. It means, as Mills says, to "have feelings of equal contempt for leading types of underdeveloped cultural workmen of the overdeveloped countries" on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

2. Irving Howe

That *The Causes of World War III* has been written by C. Wright Mills, author of *Power Elite* and a man who in recent years has made a notable contribution to democratic radicalism in America, is reason enough for taking it seriously. The pamphlet itself—it would be unfair to treat it as a book—is not a good one. It is characterized by a relentless thrust of assertion and a bludgeoning style, neither of which is much affected by complexity of argument or thoroughness of evidence. But it is an important pamphlet because at the present moment, when there is a general and justified weariness with the sterility of the cold war and an incipient sentiment that at almost any cost a deal must be worked out with the Russians, it expresses certain views and moods.

Surely there are few things we need more than a sharply-articulated proposal for a democratic foreign policy that can be counterposed to the Dulles stance. But I think it is this very sense of urgency, which all intelligent men share, that has led to the analytic carelessness and moral disequilibrium of Mill's pamphlet. Many of his specific proposals are fine, many of his specific observations valid; but the mode or style of thought to which he has recently turned seems to me unacceptable for the democratic left.

Most of *The Causes* is devoted to a

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description of the power mechanics of the Cold War; the way the accumulation of armaments has led to the "idiot's strategy" of amassing weapons powerful enough to destroy humanity; the way the power blocs have worked each other into a paralysis of "semi-organized stalemate"; the way both sides, through stupidity, fear and callousness, help perpetuate this stalemate.

Mills restates this familiar description with his characteristic forcefulness, though also with some serious faults. But what needs first to be noticed is that such a description does not answer the question implicitly posed in this title: what are the *causes* of World War III? Within which political-intellectual framework does he wish to present his argument? I do not mean that he should provide a full-scale academic or Marxist thesis; not at all. But a writer of his sophistication ought to distinguish between a description of the present state of the cold war and an analysis of the historical causes that have led us to this state.

Is the cold war primarily the result of traditional imperialist rivalries? Is it due to a clash between two divergent world-outlooks, democracy and totalitarianism? Should it be regarded mainly in terms of conflicting national interests? Or are we now to see it as a clash between a decadent capitalism and a vibrant new Communism?

These are possibilities; there are others. Political wisdom does not consist simply in taking one's pick or contriving a synthesis. But if one is going to talk about the *causes* of World War III, it would seem necessary to say something substantial about these, or other, ways of dealing with the problem. And this Mills does not do.

Perhaps, however, like some of us in DISSENT, he tries to approach the problem piece-meal, without elaborate theories? Were he writing about a particular issue like the Berlin crisis or the mid-East, this might be satisfactory. But if one is writing a book called *The Causes of World War III,* there is really some obligation to offer generalized statements about—the causes. Otherwise, you succumb to the danger of arguing as if the cold war were a blight of mysterious origin that can be eliminated by urging house holders on both sides of the street to use the proper brand of weed-killer.

THE *Causes,* to be sure, does have an intellectual framework, but a framework that by its very nature cannot yield an answer to the questions I have raised. Mills advances the idea that both Russia and the U.S. are instances of a world-wide drift toward "the mass society." A polarization of power has taken place in the world, so that today there are only two effective power centers. Within each industrialized nation there is a similar centralization.

> In the two superstates . . . facilities of violence are absolute . . . politically each of them is increasingly a closed world; and in all these spheres their bureaucracies are world-wide.

That differences still exist between Russia and the U.S., Mills recognizes; yet "so similar are the bureaucratic facts of their industrialization . . . that in their encounter we witness their parallel development." And it is upon this last notion that Mills places his main stress.

Now part of what Mills is saying here is surely true. The theory of "mass society" is indispensable, though

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not sufficient, for an understanding of the modern world. But to note that Russia and the U.S. are both examples of a drift toward the mass society cannot be regarded as an answer—good or bad—to the questions raised earlier concerning the *causes* of the cold war.

For if the "parallel development" and increasingly bureaucratic structures of the two superstates were really crucial, one might wonder why Russia and the U.S. did not become harmonious partners rather than bitter enemies. Surely the trend toward a parallel "massification" of the two societies cannot have been the decisive cause of so sharp and deep-going a conflict. And if tomorrow there were to be a rapprochment between the two superstates, resting perhaps upon a tacit division of the world into spheres of influence, would that be the result of a "parallel development" of the two societies? No more, I should think, than their past and present antagonisms. A rapprochement might be facilitated—though also hindered—by this "parallel development"; but if we wish to consider the operative causes of the cold war, or of its possible ending, we must inquire into other factors which have to do with social, economic and ideological *differentiations* between the two superstates.

In a word, then, the theory of "mass society," be it right or wrong, tells us very little about the causes of World War III.

THERE ARE OTHER difficulties in Mills' approach:

1) It systematically understates the significance of political ideas and ideologies as motifs affecting the behavior of and helping to explain the differences between nations—a failing almost inevitably a consequence of his hard-boiled stress upon "power" as a dominant factor in world politics. In terms of analysis, this leads to an underrating of the role of Communist ideology. In terms of values, it means underrating the role of democratic sentiments in the West.

2) In the name of a long-range and necessarily speculative analysis of *one* tendency in modern society, Mills severely minimizes the differences in nature and quality between the Western world and the Communist countries. Both may be headed in the same direction; but one's political-moral response is largely determined by a measurement of how far they are from the alleged goal, at what rate they are travelling, and what conditions of life they permit for the human beings forced to take these journeys. There is a crucial difference between America, a democratic country that shows some signs of drifting toward authoritarianism, and Russia, which for decades has been something considerably worse.

Mills is aware of this difference; he merely fails to take it into vital consideration; and sometimes he unaccountably minimizes its importance. In both countries, he tells us, "political struggles tend to be replaced by administrative decisions." Now in the U.S., it is true, political struggles of "articulate publics" (to use Mills' excellent phrase) have *tended* to be replaced by administrative decisions. That this remains a tendency is partly shown by our ability still to protest against it. But where in Russia during the past three decades have there been any free or open "political struggles" involving "articulate publics" that have then *"tended* to be replaced by administrative decisions?" Nor is

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this a quibble over phrasing, as a casual reader might assume; it involves that crucial assimilation of the U.S. and Russia into one category which is close to, if not actually the heart of Mills' argument.

Again: "The ideas of freedom and rationality . . . are now quite ambiguous in the new societies of the United States and of the Soviet Union." One would expect a sociologist as expert as Mills to specify which social or intellectual strata he is referring to; surely it is hazardous to assume that there exists a common attitude toward freedom shared by all groups within each society. But more important, the idea of freedom is sometimes ambiguous in the U.S.: in some ways respected, in some ways not. But I fail to see anything ambiguous about the attitude of the Soviet state or its ruling party toward the idea of freedom: they simply deny what any serious person would regard as human freedom. That there are people in Russia and the satellite countries who yearn for freedom; that communication should be established with such people—yes, of course. But surely this does not sanction so dubious a step as aligning either logically or morally the ambiguous freedom of the U.S. with the unambiguous unfreedom of Russia.

3) Mills' approach to the war danger focuses upon the "irresponsibility" of the leaders on both sides. Decisions in Russia and the U.S. are now made by small groups of powerful men; the democratic process, even when relatively genuine, affects mainly "middle-level" (that is, not crucial) issues; it is the power elites that manage the cold war; hence, it follows, almost everything now depends on the good-will and intelligence of a handful of men. But if so, Mills has twisted his way back to the view of those soft-headed liberals whom he usually dismisses: the view that if only the leaders got together and "communicated" in prolonged conversations and were willing to be reasonable. . . . And if Mills is right, then he unexpectedly does offer new comfort for this kind of approach.*

WHAT I FIND most disturbing in *The Causes* is a certain notion it approaches concerning coexistence. Now in one obvious but important sense, coexistence is indispensable. Both superstates exist; they can at present be removed only through war; and war is unthinkable. That means that negotiations are necessary, and where there are negotiations there may have to be concessions. But what troubles me is a sentiment one finds these days which urges not merely this political coexistence but also a kind of "moral coexistence," by which I mean an accommodation not merely with Russia as a power but with Communist dictatorship as a form of society. (It may be that a Secretary of State, negotiating with the Rus-

* Mills is somewhat less than clear as to what he believes the attitudes of the two power elites are toward war. On page 88: "I assume that there have been and are in the U.S.A. and in the U.S.S.R. 'war parties,' men who want war; and also 'peace parties,' men who do not want war . . . Most of those who consciously want war and accept it, and so help create its 'inevitability,' want it in order to shift the locus of their problems' [their problems, that is, as members of the U.S. power elite having to deal with an intractable world.—I.H.]

Twelve pages later: "Do the Russian elite recognize that World War III would not be to Russia's advantage? . . . The answer is yes every bit as much for the Russian elite as it is for the American elite."

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sians, cannot always heed this distinction: all the more reason for intellectuals of the democratic left to stress it!)

Mills, to be sure, does not write as a spokesman for "moral coexistence"; but at a number of points he comes uncomfortably close to it. He seems not to feel any overwhelming urge to notice that whatever arrangements may have to be made with the Russian state, there can be no secure peace or genuine relaxation as long as totalitarianism flourishes. He writes impatiently of those who persist in dwelling on "the evil character of the enemy." Well, it is really a question of the character of Russian *society*—though I think it also important to remember that Khrushchev and Mikoyan have committed many evil acts that, to put it mildly, do call their characters into question. Mills writes that "the only realistic military view is the view that war, and not Russia, is now the enemy." No; the only realistic military (and political) view is that both the Russian regime and war are enemies, and that ways should be found to limit the power of the first while preventing the outbreak of the second. Mills writes that "as the Soviet economy is further industrialized, this kind of imperialist temptation [the temptation to "brutal conquest"] loses its strength. The reverse is the case with capitalist imperialism." Another hasty generalization that cannot bear scrutiny: Did the advanced state of Russian industrialization keep Khrushchev and Mikoyan from "brutal conquest" in Hungary? And is there not some evidence —for example, in England— that "the imperialist temptation" of the capitalist countries has decreased? The matter is complex, and I would not pretend that my two questions do more than indicate that Mills has borrowed from certain pseudo-Marxist sources a crude generalization which, at the very least, requires extensive qualifying.

One last quotation:

> The Soviet intervention in Hungary might be supposed a ground for believing that agreements with the Soviet would be useless. There is of course no moral excuse for the Russian intervention, but there is a political explanation: given the armaments race, Harry Lustig has suggested, "the Russians felt they could not afford to let Hungary become at best neutral and at worst another base for American bombers and missiles."

If this be explanation, then one need hardly worry about excuses! A little too conveniently for the Russians, Harry Lustig (whoever he might be) raises the spectre of American missiles in Hungary—neither a genuine option nor a necessary consequence of the wish of the Hungarian people to achieve national freedom. There are no missile bases in Titoist Yugoslavia: why should there have been in a free Hungary? The truth is that Khrushchev and Mikoyan suppressed the Hungarian revolution because they feared the spread of freedom to other satellite countries and to their own borders. That this central fact of our time should escape Mr. Lustig is not our concern; but that C. Wright Mills should care to lean on Lustig at so crucial a moment is extremely depressing.

THERE REMAINS an 18 point program which climaxes *The Causes*. It is a mixture of 1) ideas that any decent person would accept (the U.S. should abolish fingerprinting of

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aliens); 2) valid radical proposals (a high percentage of our national income should go to economic aid to underdeveloped countries); 3) notions so doubtful that they require both prolonged debate and separate presentation if they are not to endanger the popularization of the previous two groups of points. Mills argues, for example, that the government should "abandon all military bases and installations outside the continental domain of the United States." This proposal, like others of its kind, is put forward as a unilateral one, though there later appears an afterthought that the Russians should be "invited and reinvited to join in each of these efforts." But it is clear that, for Mills, American action in this respect should not be contingent upon Russian acceptance of our "invitation." At no point, however, does he trouble seriously to consider the possible consequences of such a step for, say, the political situation in Europe. Does his program mean, for example, that the West should now withdraw from Berlin? One might suppose that such questions would be confronted in a somewhat sustained way; they are not.

My point is not so much that I disagree with a few of Mills' 18 points, but that his book is guilty of a high-handed carelessness as to the possible consequences of their adoption. Something can perhaps be said for unilateral disarmament or for unilateral withdrawal from Europe. But it is distressing to see a man like Mills advance these highly problematic notions in tidy little paragraphs without a serious and sustained discussion of possible repercussions, which is to say, their extreme riskiness. It is a procedure that may stir some readers —generally those already prepared for such responses—to emotions of indignant certitude; but I doubt that it will contribute to their political education.

An Estimate of Trotsky

TROTSKY'S DIARY IN EXILE: 1935. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1958, 218 pp. $4.00.

The general habit of considering Stalinism and present-day Communism as identical with, or at least as a continuation of revolutionary Marxism, has also led to an increasing misunderstanding of the personalities of the great revolutionary figures: Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. Just as their theories are seen as related to those of Stalin and Khrushchev, the picture of the "revolutionary fanatic" is applied to them as it is to the vengeful killer Stalin and to the opportunistic conservative Khrushchev. This distortion is a real loss for the present and the future. In whatever way one may disagree with Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, there can be no doubt that as persons they represent a flowering of Western humanity.

They were men with an uncompromising sense of truth, penetrating

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to the very essence of reality, and never taken in by the deceptive surface; of an unquenchable courage and integrity; of deep concern and devotion to man and his future; unselfish and with little vanity or lust for power. They were always stimulating, always alive, always themselves, and whatever they touched became alive. They represented the Western tradition in its best features: its faith in reason and in the progress of man. Their errors and mistakes are the very ones which also follow from Western thinking: rationalism and the Western overestimation of the efficacy of force which underlies the great middle-class revolutions of the last few centuries.

It is not accidental that we know little of the personal lives of these men. They did not take themselves as important; they did not write about themselves, nor speculate about their motivations. In view of the fact that personal data on any of the great revolutionary leaders is very scarce (we have Lenin's and Marx' and Engels' letters and—in German—a collection of personal memories about Marx) the Harvard University Press has rendered a singular service with the publication of Trotsky's diary from the year 1935, covering the time of the last months of his stay in France and of his arrival in Norway.

No doubt Trotsky as an individual was as different from Marx, Engels and Lenin as they were among themselves; and yet in being permitted to have an intimate glimpse of the personal life of Trotsky, one is struck by all that he has in common with these productive personalities. Whether he writes about political events, or Emma Goldman's autobiography, or Edgar Wallace's detective stories, his reaction goes to the roots, is penetrating, alive and productive. Whether he writes about his barber, the French police officials or Mr. Henri Spaak, his judgment is profound and to the point. When he has a chance to get a visa from the newly formed Norwegian Labor Government, which would be a most fortunate salvation from an ever-increasingly difficult exile in France, he does not hesitate for a minute to write a sharp criticism of the Norwegian Labor Party. In the midst of insecure exile, illness, cruel Stalinist persecution of his family, there is never a note of self-pity or even despair. There is objectivity and courage and humility. This is a modest man; proud of his cause, proud of the truth he discovers, but not vain or self-centered. The words of admiration and concern in which he expresses himself about his wife are deeply moving. Just as was the case with Marx, here was the concern, understanding and sharing of a deeply loving man which shines through Trotsky's diary. He loved life and its beauty. One version of his testament he ends with the following words: "I can see the bright green strip of grass beneath the wall, and the clear blue sky above the wall, and sunlight everywhere. Life is beautiful. Let the future generations cleanse it of all evil, oppression and vileness, and enjoy it to the full."

Articles by David Bazelon and Harold Rosenberg, discussing Trotsky in the light of his diary will appear in our next issue.

THE GRATITUDE we owe the Harvard Press for rescuing the picture of Trotsky for the present and for

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future generations does not, however, prevent me from expressing shock and dismay at the fact that the Harvard University Press advertised the book recently saying: "It [the diary] reveals the anguish and loneliness of his exile, often lays *bare his underlying fanaticism and selfishness,* and offers positive, historically important commentary on both local and international politics." (My italics, E.F.) Quite aside from the fact that it is most unusual for a publisher to criticize his own author by derogatory remarks in advertising copy, this procedure is unforgivable because there is nothing in the diary which "lays bare" Trotsky's selfishness. The only thing it lays bare is exactly the opposite. I would challenge the copy writer of the Harvard Press advertisement to quote even a single sentence from the diary which would indicate Trotsky's "selfishness." He probably fell for the popularly shared misunderstanding of such persons as Marx and Trotsky. If a man who sees the essence of social and individual reality says what he sees, without sham and equivocation, he is taken to be egocentric, aggressive and vain. If he has unshakable convictions, he is called a fanatic, quite regardless of whether these convictions are acquired by intense experience and thought, or whether they are irrational ideas with a paranoid tinge. It is to be hoped that the statement will be omitted from further announcements.

ERICH FROMM

Seeds Beneath the Snow

THE BROKEN MIRROR, A COLLECTION OF WRITINGS FROM CONTEMPORARY POLAND, Ed. by Pawel Mayewski; Introduction by Lionel Trilling. Random House. New York, 1958. 209 pp. $3.50.

This competent translation of some of the writings of the younger Polish intellectuals in the forefront of the recent revolt against Stalinist orthodoxy serves to remind us that those who assumed that totalitarian dominance would extinguish intellectual life were profoundly mistaken. In Jan Strzelecki's *Notes 1950-1953,* written, though of course not published, at the high point of Stalinist terror, the insight into the mechanism of totalitarian domination is as at least as penetrating as that of the Western observers who attempted to describe the phenomenon "from the outside." When Strzelecki writes, "Participation in public and political life may become an instrument of dehumanization," or "Thus we spread over people and the world the opaque dome of our superstructure.... There are no experiences but those we allow the people to have," there is a shock of recognition: these men *know* as deeply as an Orwell the inner mechanism of totalitarian dominance.

It was simply not true, as so many believed, that in totalitarian societies there flourish only opportunists and

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dupes; the conscious effort not to be duped seems to have become a peculiar stimulus for the development of a critical imagination. When Strzelecki writes, "We have become ascetics of the geometry of organized life," we realize that he has penetrated the innermost layers of the totalitarian ethos.

Some of the writers here translated were once enthusiastic Communists, some seem to have been critical from the beginning, others apparently maintained a somewhat detached stance; but all converged in their passionate rejection of the system of thought control. For many of them this rejection was clearly painful. Several of these writers had taken an active part in laying the foundations of the very system they now abhorred. But the painfulness of their experience, as the editor reminds us, led them, in the process of self-questioning, to pose issues wider and more fundamental than the immediate political problems at hand. Living in what philosophers call extreme situations, they were enabled to transcend the immediacy of the topical and to gain access to layers of meaning where the eternal problems of responsibility and guilt, of action and inaction could be confronted in a new light. And that is why this collection should not only be read as a document on the spiritual evolution of men whose experiences were so different from ours. It should also and at the same time be read as a contribution to our own quest for self-understanding. These men are concerned with problems which, beyond the difference of setting and concrete historical experience, are our problems as much as theirs.

Recent reports from Poland indicate that the freedom briefly enjoyed by the Polish intellectuals is coming to an end. A number of "revisionist" writers have been censored, a number of their publications have been suppressed. The Gomulka regime is not likely to reinstate the cultural terror which prevailed during the Stalinist period, yet the very logic of his rule forces Gomulka to suppress the voices of dissent. It may be that another ice age will follow the thaw. But we know, now, that there always will be seeds beneath the snow.

LEWIS COSER

Another Burden for God

The "red" Dean of Canterbury recently wrote: "Stalin was a rough and stern man because he had a dirty job to do. But God sees all, so I think that Stalin is safe."

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Miscellany

A First Encounter with Dostoevsky

Ignazio Silone

MY FIRST CONTACT with Dostoevsky's novels was rather belated, I am ashamed to say. It came only when I was twenty-two. And what is more, it was in a sense imposed on me by circumstances. The conditions of my undertaking the reading of Dostoevsky were anything but ordinary—so suitable, in fact, for the understanding of this exceptional writer that it may be worth while to give a brief account of them.

To be precise, I happened just then to be living—it proved to be for two months only—in the "Carcel Modelo" [model prison] of Barcelona. The simple explanation is that Spain was at that time ruled by the military directorate presided over by Primo de Rivera, whose police found my presence in the country—obviously unjustifiable on touristic grounds— a matter of excessive concern. A hostile critic might deduce from this that if I was behind in my reading, I nevertheless displayed a certain precocity in the field of "political delinquency."

When I was taken there, early in the year 1923, the Barcelona prison was packed with Catalans, syndicalists, socialists, communists and anarchists. What magnificent men they were! In no other country in the world have I known men as admirable as those Spanish "subversives."

The "Carcel Modelo" was indeed, in certain respects, a truly model prison. Among the anarchists confined there, several had been condemned to death for acts of terrorism. I hope to have the time, some day, to tell the stories of certain of those men. Especially vivid in my memory remains a very young painter, still under age, with whom I had a chance to become friends, thanks to the kindness of the prison doctor, himself incarcerated for "separatist ideas." The administration, on discovering a doctor among the prisoners, had seized the opportunity, for reasons of economy, to dismiss the former incumbent, a physician from the outside.

I should like, before coming to my discovery of Dostoevsky, to say a few more words about that young painter who was condemned to die. He himself was in a purely Dostoevskian situation.

After his sentence (in Spain execution is by the garrote—that is, strangulation), an eminent Catholic jurist had ventured to state publicly that no Spanish legal code, including the military, sanctioned the death penalty for minors. Had the judges forgotten this? Public opinion was aroused, and as a consequence the execution was postponed. The military men in power were uncertain how to proceed. Were they to lose face because of a legality? In the end it was rumored that respect for the law had prevailed: they would wait, and execute the guilty man when he was twenty-one. (Notwithstanding that the offense with which he was charged had been committed during his minority.)

The doomed young man had lost nothing of his good humor: he amused himself by drawing caricatures of Spanish generals, invariably flanked by their enormous swords. But it was difficult for the rest of us to share his carefree spirits. And none of us dared complain that time passed slowly.

THE ACCOMMODATING doctor allowed me to spend all my mornings in his infirmary with the young lad, after informing the authorities that both of us were in need of daily medical attention. The doctor was an excellent man. In a sense, he was the model doctor for a model prison. I have never understood why he should have been so considerate of me, a complete stranger.

Besides this relative freedom each morning, he obtained books and magazines that helped us endure the long afternoons and evenings—stretches that were interminable for prisoners returned to the solitude of their cells. And as chance would have it, there were, among the books he had available, various volumes of Dostoevsky, in French translation. Thus I had the immense joy of reading, for the first time, *The Brothers Karamazov* and *The Idiot*. It is beyond my power to say, now, how overwhelming

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I found them. No work of literature had ever affected me so much. Soon I lost track of all notion of time and place.

I was no longer in prison. The reading of these books caused the walls of my narrow cell to vanish, and transported me thousands of miles distant, to an atmosphere that filled me with an anguish such as I had never known. Sometimes I was walking with an immense crowd along the banks of a great river, the Neva, while far off in the bright night gleamed the gilded domes of a monastery. Or in a large garden, sitting among jasmine, I tremblingly watched Prince Mishkin as he waited for Nastasia Filippovna. Or in the monastery hall I knelt amidst other pilgrims, listening to the hoarse inspired voice of a holy old man, the *starets* Zosima.

What else could I possibly have talked about with that young man who had been condemned to death, each morning when I rejoined him in the infirmary?

Intervening time has done nothing to change my remembrance: those were marvelous days. They were among the most beautiful days of my life.

(*Translated by* FRANCIS STEEGMULLER)

We Keep Getting Affluenter All the Time

OUR READERS—and Prof. Galbraith —may be interested in some sobering statistics which appeared in "Taxes and Living Costs vs: a Factory Worker's Paycheck," *Industrial Bulletin,* New York State Department of Labor, February, 1959, pp. 14-17. The article deals with trends in the real spendable earnings—wages, after federal and state income and social security taxes, in constant dollars—of the average factory-production worker in the wealthiest state in the Union during the past decade.

The base period used is 1947-49, two good years and a bad one. Two major factors are considered: the rising tax burden and rising consumer prices. Gross weekly wages rose from $55.31 in 1947-49 to $82.49 in 1958 (ten months), a rise of forty-nine per cent. But real spendable earnings — —?

The single worker: Average weekly tax liability rose from $7.84 to $16.30. Another $12.55 has been swallowed up by the twenty-three per cent rise in consumer prices. This leaves him with $53.64, in 1947-49 dollars, to spend, compared to $47.47 in 1947-49. (Disregarding inflation, he now has $66.19 to spend).

The worker with three dependents: Average weekly tax liability rose from $1.65 to $7.65. Take off $14.19 in price rises, and he has left $60.65, in 1947-49 dollars to spend, compared to $53.66 in 1947-49. (Disregarding inflation, he now has $74.84 to spend).

The article concludes:

> Hence, under the combined impact of taxes and prices, the single worker can buy only about thirteen per cent more goods and services at the end of the decade than at its beginning, and the married worker can buy about fifteen per cent more.
>
> Considering that the face amount of the average salary has increased about five per cent a year, it is not at all impressive to discover that the average worker's net purchasing power only has risen slightly more than one per cent a year.

No, we cannot speak of the pauperization of the proletariat. But we can wonder somewhat about affluence. The average worker with two kids, bringing home $60.65 in today's dollars, still has to pay union dues, disability-benefits insurance, group insurance, sales and other local taxes . . . then, after minor things like food, rent, and clothing are taken care of, he can really go on a fling with his affluence.

A. A.

For Men Only

Charles Shapiro

THE HIDDEN and unhidden persuaders of Madison Avenue have regularly presented the American Male with his very own products, untainted by a speck of effeminacy. He-men eat Wheaties, smoke cigarettes, bathe with soaps and douse themselves with deodorants, all of which emphasize their ruggedness ("Women say 'deodorant.' Men say 'Trig' "). But only recently has our wonderful world of literature also been organized along sexual lines. The announcement of this change reached me in a letter from one John Hardy, advertising director

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for Nelson Doubleday, Inc., "the world's greatest book club organization." Mr. Hardy was obviously excited, for in his form letter he burst out: "I am writing this note from my office late in the evening because I want to tell you at once about a great new idea in book publishing...." He just couldn't wait.

The special features of this "sensational new series of books edited to meet the tastes and interests of American men today" are implicit in its name, "Reading-for-Men." The three club rules, no sissies allowed, are:

> 1. Each volume will contain 320 pages or more of real masculine reading—every month one full length new book and with it four or more generous extracts—no condensations—of other outstanding books to give you a broad insight into what American men are reading.
> 2. The all-male editorial board will pick books that they know rate high on the popularity polls. You'll no longer waste time trying to find good reading entertainment—these are the "top" books discovered for you.
> 3. The books are to be handsomely designed, full library sized volumes that build up into a beautiful set.

Mr. Hardy, fool that he is, allowed me to splurge a nickel on a sample volume. "Maybe you think we're nuts to make such a wide-open offer. Maybe so, but I'm convinced that a whole lot of men in this country are going to welcome these books with open hands and say *keep 'em coming.*" I took Hardy at his word, and the first masculine volume arrived along with the request that you "tag along with us for a few months."

There are five parts to my copy of *Reading-for-Men.* The feature male attraction is the complete text of Leslie Turner White's "headlong action and adventure novel" *Monsieur Yankee,* which is conveniently summarized by the editors: "Monsieur Yankee chooses a course of action which leads to his being mistaken for one of the most notorious of British spies; framed into a duel with France's arch killer; entangled with the seductive French informer, Ninon; and swept through a turbulent series of adventures that culminate in a spectacular sea chase and the explosion of the powderkeg of intrigue that characterized France in 1793." Quick dips into this swashbuckler bear out the accuracy of this description.

Other male-directed features include excerpts from *The Dog Who Wouldn't Be* ("the warmhearted Best Seller about a Dog and his Boy"); *Low Level Mission* ("One of the most worthwhile books to come out of World War II"); and Stewart Holbrook's *The Era of the Moguls,* the author being hailed as "the only ex-lumberjack who has lectured at Harvard University on American history." (Presumably his career as logger exempts Holbrook from the effeminate traces he might have picked up at Harvard.) As an extra added attraction *Reading-for Men* offers selected jokes from Bennett Cerf's *The Life of the Party.* The yaks come from such sections as Animals, Automobiles, and Sports. Of the seven jokes devoted to Doctors, three are aimed in the direction of psychiatrists.

PERHAPS *Reading-for-Men* is an obvious and predictable development for the book club industry which has featured organizations dealing out specialized volumes in Religion, History, Gardening, Antiques, Art, Mystery, Farming, Horses, Science, Miniatures, Taxes, and Yachts. The 1955-56 edition of Literary Market Place lists over 100 such clubs, my favorite being something billed as "The Pastoral Psychology Book Club."

So why not a book club for men? Who, nowadays, can be *absolutely* certain of American writers that hide under male names? Leslie Fiedler has charmingly demonstrated that Huck Finn, long the apotheosis of everyman's American boyhood, is open to more than polite suspicion. After all, what *really* went on during that raft trip down the Mississippi? Do *you* know?

Now, however, we can be assured about the manliness of our writers by a board of experts. All we have to do is subscribe to *Reading-for-Men,* settle down with our Marlboros, and have a quiet evening of hair-on-the-chest reading. And anyone who doesn't like it can go back to his knitting, his Henry James novels, his cream-puffs.

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LETTERS

Hannah Arendt's Reflections

Editors:

In the Winter 1959 issue of DISSENT, Miss Hannah Arendt quotes in the preliminary statement to her article, "Reflections on Little Rock," some remarks I made about Negroes being less interested in abolishing laws against miscegenation than in combatting segregation. The reader is referred to my article "Democracy and Desegregation" in *The New Leader* of April 13, 1958. But he will search in vain for these remarks or similar ones in my *New Leader* article.*

She therewith provides the evidence of a scandalous abuse of the decencies of intellectual exchange.

Miss Arendt's article was originally sent to me by the Editors of *Commentary* with a request to discuss the theme with special reference to her position. I consented, after much urging, because of the crucial importance of the subject. My article was set up in galleys and a copy sent to Miss Arendt. After she read my reply she withdrew her piece from *Commentary*. It is false to assert, as do the Editors of DISSENT, that "an earlier opportunity to print her views had been withdrawn." Nor does Miss Arendt herself make this claim. Whatever the course of her previous negotiations with the Editors of *Commentary* may have been, at the time she withdrew her article it was ready for publication together with mine, for the March 1958 issue of *Commentary*.

I was shocked when informed that Miss Arendt had withdrawn her piece from publication after she saw the galleys of my critical reply. She had been apprised that I would be invited to comment and had agreed. I telephoned her and tried to persuade her to reconsider. Knowing that she had had some difficulties with the Editors of *Commentary* about the editing of her article, I proposed that her article and mine be published in the *Partisan Review* or any other magazine she suggested. She said she regretted I had been put to the trouble of replying to her but that she did not wish to publish her article in *Commentary* or anywhere else because the subject was no longer topical. Segregation in education was topical in December, 1957 (when I was first approached) but not in February, 1958 (when she withdrew it)!

I was offered an opportunity to publish my critical reply to Miss Arendt with an explanation that she had withdrawn her piece after she had read my rejoinder. Despite Miss Arendt's behavior, I thought this would be an unsportsmanlike thing to do. I thereupon rewrote my entire article, carefully eliminating all reference to her. I even left uncriticized some extreme positions she took to the effect that Negroes should give priority to agitation for equality in the bedroom rather than to equality in education. For unless I could document such views, they would seem incredible to those who had a sincere desire to win the struggle against segregation in American schools. That is why there is no treatment of the subject in my *New Leader* discussion and why the sentences quoted by her do not appear in it.

After my article was safely out of the way Miss Arendt has the *Chutzpah* (or should I say *unerfrorener Frechheit*) to quote not from the article as published but from my original galleys, which were still in her possession, without explaining to the reader how I could be "replying" to her own, not previously published, article.

I find this behavior strange in one who lectures Americans about their intellectual standards.

March 4, 1959 SIDNEY HOOK

HANNAH ARENDT *replies:*

Mr. Hook misrepresents the facts. It never occurred to me to withdraw my article because of his reply. Mr. Hook, I believe, was rather well informed of the unusual scenes which took place in *Commentary's* offices in 1957 and eventually resulted in my final withdrawal. Editorial difficulties did not play a role in my decision because, except for minor corrections, the article had been set up in galleys as I wrote it. Whatever Mr. Hook might have known from other sources, he knew my true reasons well enough since I had explained the situa-

* The reference to the *New Leader* was inserted by the editors through a misunderstanding. We regret our error, and offer our apologies to Dr. Hook.—Eds.

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tion to him myself in two lengthy telephone conversations, when I also tried to persuade him to let the controversy rest until the issue became topical again so that both our articles could be published in some other magazine.

The first time I offered to withdraw my article from *Commentary* was in a letter dated November 23, 1957, long before Mr. Hook wrote his reply. My final decision was stated in a letter dated February 1, 1958, long after I had read it. This letter again had nothing to do with Mr. Hook. I had just been officially informed that the editors were not ready for publication and were indeed very doubtful that they would be able to publish the article at all.

The reason I did not refer to Mr. Hook's *New Leader* article was that I had been told by people who had read the original galleys that it had been virtually unchanged, except for elimination of my name. Since the article appeared shortly before I left for Europe, I have never read it except in the original version. I did not have the *New Leader* piece in my possession when I wrote the preliminary remark for DISSENT.

Mr. Hook's present letter is both distressing and illuminating. Distressing because he is a philosopher, not a social scientist, and therefore should be aware of the importance of principles and be able to grasp such elementary distinctions as that between a law and a custom. It is illuminating because by calling abrogation of racial legislation "the equality of bedroom" (I did not believe my eyes), he reveals much more clearly than in his article how little he understands human dignity, however much he may be concerned with social opportunity.

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Editors:

Hannah Arendt's "Reflections on Little Rock" [DISSENT, Fall 1958] are particularly perplexing when we recall some of the passages in *The Origins of Totalitarianism.*

In that book Dr. Arendt excels in describing the condition of the totalitarian victim. The nuances of meaning in suggesting his characteristics, the fine distinctions she makes among the various stages of his disintegration and murder, have rarely been equalled. And the continual violence of it all, as *violation of rules,* stands out. Is it too implausible to describe—very loosely certainly, but with some justification nonetheless—the human condition of many people in the United States as bearing *some* resemblance to the totalitarian victim? The attitude of many whites that Negroes are *only* members of a black class—the violation of basic laws by policemen thus generating a sense of constant terror—the image of the Black Other-Society as great Beast-Enemy? Isn't it more plausible to adopt this view within the context of Dr. Arendt's principal writings rather than her ideas concerning southern state's rights?

In spite of all the libertarian statements in her larger work, and granting her concern for the Negro as victim of southern law-violators in the DISSENT article, she balks completely on the issue of segregated education. She interprets the decision of the Supreme Court as an invasion of "rights of privacy" and not as providing equal protection of the laws. Why? Because, writes Dr. Arendt, public education is the proper function of the states and any weakening of "states' rights," (read states' *power* in this case since a legal right does not exist if the Supreme Court rules it doesn't), unbalances the Federal structure. "Liberals fail to understand that the nature of power is such that the power potential of the union as a whole will suffer if the regional foundations on which this power rests are undermined. . . . If the various sources from which it springs are dried up, the whole structure becomes impotent."

It is a commonplace for liberals to be accused by conservatives and *realpolitiker* of being blind to the realities of power. *If they are* power-blind, I fear that Dr. Arendt has joined them (us). Her misleading metaphors oversimplify the complexities of power distribution in the American Federal system. Under what conditions would we have a "good balance" in the Union? If recent Constitutional history suggests anything, it is that some of the states have been usurping national rights guaranteed to citizens by the Constitution, and hence have been trying to pinch in on federal powers.

What is more important for our pur-

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poses, however, is that Dr. Arendt's arguments highlight the paradoxes of her general political thought. In *The Origins* as well as in her article, there are fine statements expressing sympathy for victims of state power juxtaposed with Burkean doctrines implying that *only* the state can protect us from the vicissitudes of natural existence. So she suggests that without the grace provided by the state in the form of civil rights, "Men become human beings and nothing else. . . . they begin to belong to the human race in much the same way as animals belong to specific animal species." She even mentions the special case of the Negro in this context: "If a Negro in a white community is considered a Negro and nothing else, he loses along with his right to equality that freedom of action which is specifically human; all his deeds are now explained as 'necessary' consequences of some 'Negro qualities'." *(Who is doing what, with which, to whom in the south?)*

It is one thing to say that contemporary political systems have deprived humans of their civil and human rights; it is quite another thing, which does not follow from the first, to hold with Burke that only the state can provide a "right" to the human condition itself. Given this view, however, Dr. Arendt's anxiety about weakening the Republic by upsetting the federal balance is understandable. Unfortunately it is also misplaced in this case. Yet it accounts for her apparently curious position on school segregation.

Dr. Ardent may have the greatest concern for political outcasts; like Burke, however, when it is feared the state *may* be wounded, she approaches it "with pious awe and trembling solictude," thus breaking with any liberation conception of politics.

Minneapolis, Minn, DAN COOPERMAN

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Editors:

Please permit a couple of small-town Virginia residents to comment on Hannah Arendt's reflections. . . .

Central to Miss Arendt's article is the order of priorities in the struggle for civil rights. She maintains that "the oppressed minorities are never the best judges in such matters . . . the order of priorities is to be determined by the Constitution and not by public opinion or by majorities." . . .

The most systematic attempt to establish a realistic table of priorities is that of Myrdal and his colleagues in *An American Dilemma.* Myrdal has been elevated to the position of devil-in-chief in the Southern whites' pantheon of saints and devils. Liberals have been strangely reluctant to accord him comparable recognition in their own gallery. From their careful investigations, Myrdal and his team derived a schedule of discriminations ranked in order of the unwillingness of the whites to relinquish them. Intermarriage, of course, ranks at the top. High on the list also are social etiquettes involving personal intimacy, e.g. dancing, eating. The less intimate, such as voting, equality in the courts, economic opportunity, rank much lower.

Myrdal found further that the "rank order of resentments" among Negroes *was almost exactly reversed.* Those discriminations the whites seemed most willing to give up were the very discriminations the Negroes resented most. Here is a singular accord among Southern Negroes and whites!

Miss Arendt's priorities may be summed up: Never mind the bulwarks; storm the citadel first! Her criticism of the civil rights bill for its failure to include "the most outrageous law of Southern states—the law which makes mixed marriages a criminal offense" is shocking in its political naiveté. That she would offer this seriously as even a possible point of attack is indeed to reassert her admission of "difficulty of understanding" and to emphasize how little Europeans understand our race problems. Nothing would be as effective in hardening and inflaming opposition to lowering the barriers as advocacy of repeal of anti-miscegenation measures. Such an attempt would have retroactive force, slamming, locking and barricading doors that have previously been cracked. . . . CHARLES H. FOSTER
LAURA H. RHYNE

Williamsburg, Virginia

Yes, as to Tone . . .

Editors:

Tumin's assault on Miss Arendt [DISSENT, Winter 1959] will cause many to wonder if it is really better to be clubbed

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to the ground by those "who share one's essential world view" than by the foe whose insolent savagery is taken for granted. It would appear that in the time of the Tumins, for a distinguished lady to offer a dissenting opinion in DISSENT will be to ask for a punch in the nose.

Speak, O oracular editors: who in bloomin' hell is Tumin, Mel?

EDWARD E. MALKIN

Ann Arbor, Mich.

[If, O outraged reader, you are granted the right to become angry with his tone, may not Tumin, Mel also be granted the right to become angry with the content of Miss Arendt's article? As to who he is: Tumin, Mel teaches at Princeton, where as it happens Miss Arendt is also teaching this semester; he recently published a study of desegregation in a North Carolina community.—Ed.]

The Pope . . .

Editors:

Henry Pachter's recent comments on the late Pope Pius XII seemed to me quite unworthy of a magazine of the caliber of DISSENT. Much of what he said was quite true and needed to be said, but a number of his statements were so unfounded and ridiculous that I can never accept right off the bat anything he might write.

First of all, I could excuse the remark about the Pope's toilet if it were made after too many martinis at a cocktail party, but to say it in sober print is to my mind vulgar. Also Mr. Pachter obviously knows nothing of Catholic theology so that for him to presume to make pronouncements on it is dishonest. He did not even take the trouble to go to the original sources before stupidly accusing the Pope of having forbidden widows to remarry, and his remarks on the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ are nonsense as anyone could find out by reading Pius XII's encyclical on the subject.

Murray Kempton's articles, by the way, contained even more errors since they were more extensive. If Mr. Pachter has such contempt for the papers (one that is well founded) why does he accept so uncritically their garbled reports of Papal statements.

ROBERT STEED,
Associate Editor, *The Catholic Worker*

HENRY PACHTER *replies:*

1) I should have said Pius XII "discouraged," rather than "forbade" remarriage; the trend of his pertinent encyclical "Casti Connubii" emphasizes the "eternal" or "perpetual" union of "flesh and soul" in matrimony. Quoting Augustine it says that "a husband or wife, if separated, should not be joined to another even for the sake of offspring," and after further quoting the Council of Trent to the same effect, that "they are one flesh," it continues: "Nor did Christ wish only to condemn any form of polygamy . . . *whether successive or simultaneous. . . .*" Catholic authorities have interpreted this as an allusion to the well-known theological difficulty of continuing monogamy in Heaven after "successive" polygamy on earth.

2) To readers interested in theology I submit the following quotations from the encyclical "Mystici Corporis Christi": "They err in a matter of divine truth who imagine the Church to be invisible, intangible, a something merely pneumatological. . . . "—"They walk the path of error who look upon it as a mere human institution with a certain disciplinary code and external ritual but lacking power to communicate supernatural life."—"There can be no real opposition or conflict between the invisible mission of the Holy Spirit and the juridical commission of Ruler and Teacher received from Christ."—"Reject every kind of mystic union by which the faithful would in any way pass beyond the sphere of creatures and rashly enter the divine even to the extent of one single attribute of eternal Godhead." Paraphrasing this passage in its context my un-theological mind has interpreted this to mean that it "excludes individualistic and mystical religiosity." In saying so, I was quite aware that the Pope in this very encyclical has tried to monopolize the term "mystical" for the Catholic church; but mysticism not only is older than the church, it has flourished outside it for centuries. My use of words conforms with common usage, and I will not be intimidated by theological Beckmessers into using the word mysticism only the way orthodox, obedient Catholics accept it. In fact the whole import of the letter is the insinuation that Pius XII's theology is the only possible one.

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3) It is charged that I failed to read the encyclicals before paraphrasing them. Sorry—my contention that Pius XII demands "surrender to the Church itself rather than to the spirit of Christ" was based on articles 92–94 of the encyclical where "false mysticism" and "false quietism" are condemned: "They want the divine Redeemer and the members of the Church to coalesce into one physical person . . . . . They would attribute the whole spiritual life of Christians and their progress in virtue exclusively to the action of the divine spirit . . . . But that men should continue consistently in their good works, that they advance generously in grace and virtue, that they strive earnestly to reach the heights of Christian perfection and at the same time do their best to stimulate others to gain the same goal—*all this the Spirit from above does not wish* to bring about *unless* men contribute their daily share of *zealous activity*" (which in articles 95—100 then is explained as "frequent confession," prayer" and "love of the Church"; all italics mine).

The doctrine which the encyclical seems to condemn is the poetical creation of enraptured saints, such as Sta. Teresa de Avila or Luis de Leon. I cannot forego the pleasure of quoting a passage from the latter's poetry: "When Christ unites not only His virtue but His body with the faithful, mingles His soul with their souls, His body with their bodies, He looks through their eyes, speaks with their tongues and works through their senses; their faces, countenances and movements are Christ's Who occupies them wholly—so intimately . . . . that nothing will be seen in them on the Last Day, nor will any Nature be found in them than His. There will be that one Nature in all; both He and they will be one and the Same in Himself." If on the basis of the encyclical this beauty will have to be purged from the next edition of the Catholic anthology from which I have quoted it, the Church will be that much the poorer. Among Gnostics and Mystics whom earlier encyclicals have condemned, however, very few can be found who teach the *physical* union of the believer with Christ. I have not misquoted the encyclical, but the evidence seems clear that the encyclical has, however, misquoted the heretics.

Lenin & the Sealed Train

Editors:

In the Autumn 1958 issue of DISSENT Boris Souvarine, in his article "A Point of History," quotes Lenin's letters to Ganetsky arranging the former's trip to Russia in 1917. This would definitely prove that Lenin did have dealings with Ganetsky!

However, David Shub's book on Lenin quotes from an article by Lenin denying any dealings with Ganetsky (article by Lenin from *Rabochii i Soldat,* July 26, 1917). In this denial Lenin admits that Ganetsky had dealings with Parvus who, in turn, did have dealings with the German government.

I would like to have Boris Souvarine's comments on Lenin's denial of any dealings on his part with Ganetsky.

PUZZLED

BORIS SOUVARINE *replies:*

Lenin never denied having had relations with Ganetsky; they were commonly known. In the article referred to above he denies any relations with Parvus and he denies having had any *financial dealings* with Ganetsky (dienezhny diela). Anyone can verify this for himself. (V. I. Lenin, "Works," volume 25, 4th edition, Moscow, 1950, page 197.)

I therefore continue to claim what I wrote.

As for Parvus' relations with Ganetsky and with several other socialists of various tendencies, there is nothing mysterious about them. Parvus was a businessman who employed several former comrades such as Ganetsky, Kozlovsky and others who made a living through his enterprises.

Lenin had nothing in common with any of that.

In the article in question he even invites the prosecutor to verify the account books and the banking transfers of Mme. Loumenson, Ganetsky's Petrograd correspondent, so as to determine the destination of funds received from Stockholm, payments made, etc.

He was quite assured as to the results of such a verification.

Finally, *after the February Revolution,* Lenin had an exchange of correspondence with Ganetsky and Kozlovsky in which he alludes twice to transmissions of funds

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(these letters have been published), but this is a matter of personal relations and modest sums without any bearing upon the enormous subsidies that the German government is alleged to have given the Party.

On this last point, two works have recently appeared (i.e., since my article was reprinted in DISSENT) which would have to be analyzed specifically.

Problems of Youth

Editors:

I have recently become a subscriber to DISSENT. I've gotten a great deal of pleasure and thought out of each issue. I am a student at Pomona College which reflects the typical gooey conservatism in its thought and mores. It is good to get a breath of fresh radicalism, even if it is only once every three months. My only criticism of DISSENT is that it doesn't come out often enough.

I also have read VOICES OF DISSENT and was much impressed by the quality of the articles and the breadth of subject and opinion reflected. One thing though, there was practically nothing about the problem of the young radical in our society. There is definitely a problem for any youth of radical opinion in today's America, and this is closely connected with the amorphousness and indefinite apathy which pervades our culture, making the formulation of any real values and the shaping of any concept of history very difficult. I think that if DISSENT were to devote an article or two to this problem and its solution (if any) that it would be quite helpful to youth.

BETTY BLANCK

[We'll try.—Eds.]

Best Wishes

Editors:

The "Free World" obviously has a unified ideology now. It is substantially the same in Paris, Washington, Little Rock, and Algiers. I have a name for it: Beat Fascism.

DISSENT is still superb—one only wishes it were a monthly instead of a quarterly. Is this possible? At all events, you have the best wishes of every intelligent socialist who knows your journal.

ALEXANDER BERIGAN

Meridian, Miss.

Among Ourselves

continued from page 106

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